My Life With Charles II • Blacks and Jews

Antonia Fraser *Charles Silberman*

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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Stalin's Century

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TRB

from Washington
December 29, 1979

Worth A Fight

Nineteen senators have written a letter to President Carter urging him to postpone a vote on the second strategic arms limitation treaty (SALT II) till after the year's presidential election. I hope that he doesn't postpone it, and that he goes to the country in a fighting speech. That is what Carter's reputation needs. He has been buoyed up (temporarily, I think) by the Iranian crisis. But can he lead or can't he? Is he willing to take an issue to the public? If the senators want to take the responsibility for defeating the treaty, at a time when our NATO allies are watching to see whether we have credibility or are a crippled giant, let them do it. Their predecessors did just that 60 years ago when they defeated the League of Nations. America has a preposterous treaty ratification system, I think, where a Senate band of 34 has veto power over an international agreement to which the world looks hopefully.

Sixty years ago, after America suffered over 320,000 casualties to "make the world safe for democracy," more than three-fourths of the Senate was ready to accept membership in the League at all times in some form or other; but there never was the two-thirds majority necessary for a particular version. The League failed. Today senators don't hate Carter the way they hated Wilson, thank God; that is one advantage of being a low-key president. But is he effective? Is he willing to take a stand, make the public comprehend and put the issue to the nation in the showdown that has to come?

The SALT treaty is non-partisan. Richard Nixon negotiated SALT I, which the Senate passed, 88 to two. It began the SALT process. The present treaty has been under discussion for six years, initiated by Henry Kissinger and including the Nixon-Brezhnev and Ford-Brezhnev summit conferences. The treaty has been endorsed by an alphabet of organizations from the AFL-CIO to World Federalists. Its course in the Senate has been erratic. It started doubtfully, then gained strength as America's allies supported it, particularly German chancellor Helmut Schmidt at the Harvard commencement last June. Then it slumped in the strange crisis when Foreign Relations Committee chairman Frank Church discerned a Russian combat brigade in Cuba (which had been there some 17 years). Now decision is delayed by Iran and the old man in Qom. Mr. Carter has paid ransom for SALT by a proposed five percent raise in the defense budget, but critics aren't satisfied; it is doubtful if any agreement with Communists would satisfy them. Postpone it till after Iran, they say; postpone it till after the election. Barry Goldwater, Strom Thurmond, and Henry Jackson mount a last-minute drive in the Armed Services Committee to condemn the treaty. On the other hand, Senate majority leader Byrd says he will bring it up for debate "early in 1980." It is his "top priority," he says.

SALT II leaves much to be desired. Expenditures for arms will not decrease, at first. They are going to increase in any event. Some missiles that would otherwise be built will be blocked, however; some guidelines will be imposed. SALT II ratifies the existence of "essential equivalence" between the two superpowers—a parity that hawks can't stomach. But SALT II is a bridge to SALT III. It represents hope for stable East-West relations. It keeps negotiations going. Because it has become a test of America's stability, responsibility, and constancy as leader of the free world in the eyes of Europe, the fate of SALT II can be compared, without too much exaggeration, to that other treaty here 60 years ago.

The young men who volunteered in 1917 and 1918 thought they had found something worth dying for. Then came peace, disillusionment, and isolationism, and GOP leaders drooling for normalcy and Harding. Wilson was stubborn. He lacked the common touch, though he had driving and passionate eloquence. He accurately predicted World War II if the League lost. Sixty years ago last November 19, the Senate rejected the treaty with the Lodge Amendments, and then on March 19, 1920, killed it. That would be an appropriate anniversary for Senator Byrd to set the SALT II vote.

Today the United States needs allies It wants help to prevent nuclear arm from proliferating—an arms contro effort known as Mutual and Balance Force Reduction (MBFR). Chancello Schmidt says, "I do not believe MBFF can be successful if SALT II fails."

The United States wants NATO allies to install short-range nuclear weapons aimed at Russia. Russia has modernized its weapons aimed at Europe. At the December 15 meeting our allies agreed to set up the missiles sometime in the mid-1980s, but with strong reservations by Holland and Belgium. They watch SALT II and America's credibility as a negotiator. And there is a third field where America wants support: it is sounding out friendly members of the UN Security Council on a stand-by plan for economic sanctions against Iran.

The question is whether democratic countries, which follow the United States, can trust our steadfastness—what with Vietnam, Watergate, the plunge of the dollar, the inability to achieve an energy program. NATO's Assembly, its interparliamentary adjunct, meeting recently in Ottawa, unanimously endorsed SALT II. Treaty rejection would jeopardize detente, the Assembly said, and NATO cohesion. Hawks in the Senate somehow still manage to argue that our allies don't really want SALT II. Senator Jackson told me at a reporters' breakfast here, when I challenged him, that he thought NATO leaders were "speaking out of both sides of their mouth." Such doubts, I believe, still animate some of the 10 senators who want the whole thing postponed.

How can responsible foreign statesmen understand or trust a government where a president negotiates a treaty and the legislature rejects it? Who runs America, anyway? Is it a safe "nuclear shield"; can it be trusted? Helmut Schmidt told Harvard June 7 that failure of SALT II meant that "instead of the universally sought curbing of the nuclear arms race, we would have to expect an even fiercer arms race."

Europe's doubt about America comes partly from America's doubt about itself. Political scientist Anthony King asks, at the end of a scholars' symposium ("The New American Political System") about our government "Who runs this place? Who is in charge?" And he declares, somewhat alarmingly, "The short answer, despite President Carter's best efforts would have to be, 'No one. Nobody is in charge.'" Is the system operative?

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Correspondence

Drugs for the mentally ill

To the editors:

Peter Sterling's article, "Psychiatry's Drug Addiction" (*TNR*, December 8), makes good anti-psychiatric politics but poor science. Sterling cannot deny that drugs can be useful and successful in treating psychosis; he tries, therefore, to trivialize or disguise this fact. He claims that drugs can treat only the "symptoms of psychosis." Can nitroglycerin do anything more than treat the symptoms of angina, insulin the symptoms of diabetes, or aspirin the symptoms of arthritis? That is the rule of medicine and the accepted standard of judging the excellence of any therapy. To imply that there is something wrong with treating the symptoms of psychosis is to hold psychiatry to standards to which we hold no other medical specialty.

The second attempt at trivialization is to imply that these drugs only make the patient "more manageable." Sterling knows that in the most rigorous scientific studies there is overwhelming evidence that drugs are better than placebos in treating psychotic symptoms that have nothing to do with manageability but much to do with the pain and distress experienced by the psychotic patient: anxiety, disorientation, confusion, etc.

When these drugs were introduced in the 1950s there was no possible way of knowing of the long-range side effects like tardive dyskinesia, which only began emerging after decades of use. A similar situation has occurred in estrogen use and raises a difficult moral problem: do we withhold drugs that appear to have great usefulness in relieving suffering pending decades-long investigations of possible long-range side effects? A difficult question, even in retrospect. To attribute insensitivity to those who used Thorazine in its early years without benefit of this hindsight is patently unfair.

Sterling is right that drugs can be abused when used promiscuously and without supervision or care for patients' complaints. But to advocate a return to the moral therapy of the 19th century, where (by Sterling's own admission) its most successful practitioner, Worcester State Hospital, had a 25 percent rate of permanent rehospitalization is stunningly anachronistic. I suspect that if Dr. Sterling spent less time in the brain lab and more time with acutely distressed psychotic patients, he might be less apt to inveigh against the use of modern drug therapy which, when used judiciously and carefully, holds out the only prospect for relief of that terrible suffering.

Charles Krauthammer, MD
Washington, DC

To the editors:

Part way through the excellent article "Psychiatry's Drug Addiction," I was struck by the realization that the overwhelming majority of the mental-hospital patients that Peter Sterling refers to as "he" are in fact women. The symptoms of tractability and good "hospital adjustment" often produced by drugs such as chlorpromazine are particularly valued in female patients—women are supposed to be docile and obedient anyway.

Ann M. Woodhull
School of Natural Sciences
Hampshire College
Amherst, Massachusetts

No Job for Becker

To the editors:

Your former intern, Rene Becker, would never make it as a reporter at the *Des Moines Register*. He has too hard a time getting his facts straight and keeping quotations ungarbled.

Becker interviewed me by phone for your November 24 editorial, "Iowa Brownout" concerning the controversy over my decision not to invite Governor Jerry Brown to the Kennedy-Carter debate our newspapers are sponsoring in January.

I explained to Becker that the criteria for invitations were quite simple. We were inviting the candidates, Republican and Democratic, who had established campaigns in Iowa and who intended to compete for support in the January precinct caucuses here. When the debate was announced on November 6, Brown had not yet set foot in Iowa, had no campaign here, and had previously signaled his intention to skip Iowa.

Your editorial correctly noted that Brown acquired a sudden interest in Iowa immediately after the debate plan became known. But it incorrectly stated that, "as far as the editors are concerned, it is too late" for Brown to be included. I never maintained it was "too late" for Brown to qualify for the debate. We made it clear he could qualify by deciding to run in Iowa. Becker must have decided it was too late.

Further, I am correctly quoted as having said, "Brown can't have it both ways." Your editorial goes on to say that "What he means is that Brown can't ignore the *Register* and then expect an invitation to the party." That is neither what I said nor what I meant. If Becker had managed to get the rest of the quotation, it would have said that Brown can't have the benefit of national exposure in the debate without deciding to take the risk of running against Carter and Kennedy in Iowa.

Our intent in sponsoring the debates is to let the people of Iowa see and compare the candidates who are competing for their support in the January caucuses. I fail to see the alleged unfairness of an invitation list based on the willingness of candidates to participate in our state's politics.

Governor Brown has changed his mind. He's decided to mount a campaign in Iowa, and challenge Carter and Kennedy for support. Whether he is what you call a "viable" candidate (what does that mean?) is irrelevant. Now he's an Iowa candidate, and so he is invited to the debate. What could be fairer?

James P. Gannon, Executive Editor
Des Moines Register and Tribune
Des Moines, Iowa

Texas Yankee

To the editors:

Vint Lawrence's caricature of George Bush (*TNR*, December 8) is a complete miss. Bush is no Texan; he is a Connecticut Yankee who merely came to Texas to make his millions, which he made not in ranching but in oil. Never at home on the range, Bush is most at home in the Petroleum Club in Houston.

Martin Shockley
Denton, Texas

Understanding Islam

To the editors:

Michael Walzer overstates the case in his discussion of religious (particularly Moslem) fervor in much of the third world ("The Islam Explosion," *TNR*, December 8). In virtually every one of the incidents he cites—Indonesia (1965), Pakistan (1971), Lebanon, Cyprus (not mentioned by Walzer), the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Sudan, Malaysia, and even Turkey—the religious cleavages are

(continued on page 32)

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Christmas Schedule

TNR will not publish next week. January 5 & 12 will be a combined issue. Best holiday wishes to our readers from *TNR*'s staff.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

December 29, 1979

More Soviet Mischief

While the United States's energy and attention have been occupied by the Iranian crisis, the world has not stopped turning. It would not be detrimental to the fate of our Tehran hostages, or to his own election campaign, for President Carter to pay some attention to two places where Soviet activity can be exposed and, perhaps, obstructed. We refer to Afghanistan and Indochina. In both cases, Soviet brutishness and disregard for the vaunted international principle of self-determination are on display, crying out for full exploitation by the United States. In neither case has the top level of the American government grasped the opportunity.

The Carter administration was late and too budget-minded in responding to the human tragedy in Cambodia. Only under bureaucratic and congressional pressure did the White House finally decide the US could part with adequate funds to contribute food and medicine to the starving.

Now, intelligence reports indicate, the aid supplies are piling up in Phnom Penh, and the Soviet-backed, Vietnam-imposed regime of Heng Samrin is refusing to distribute them. One theory is that Vietnam does not want food to fall into the hands of Pol Pot rebels; another is that Vietnam is purposely embarked on a campaign of genocide, figuring that the fewer Cambodians remaining alive, the easier it will be to fulfill Vietnam's historic purpose of dominating Indochina. To the Cambodians, it does not make much difference which theory is correct. They continue to starve by the tens of thousands.

Other Vietnamese tactics serve the same end, such as placing land mines in Cambodian rice paddies to prevent cultivation. There are recent reports that the Vietnamese also are covering rice fields with oil slicks—the poor man's Agent Orange. There are also persistent reports that Vietnam is using poison gases against both Cambodians and Hmong (Meo) tribesmen in Laos.

The Soviet Union is responsible for this, indirectly if not directly. The rulers of Vietnam have made such a botch of their own economy that they are heavily dependent on the Soviets for food and other commodities, not to mention military aid and international political support. If the Soviet government pressured Vietnam to halt its inhumanity and threatened to cut off its support for Vietnam, Vietnam could not afford to resist. Just a little pressure might save thousands of lives. But Soviet influence appears to be all in the other direction.

The United States should be creating a mighty political uproar about Cambodia and Laos, raising the issue in every international forum every day to focus the righteous indignation of the whole world on the Soviet Union and Vietnam. Instead, there has been just one White House statement on the subject recently, on December 6, and that one got lost amidst the Iran news.

If we do *all* we can, we may fail. The Cambodians may be doomed. But they ought not be wiped out without our having tried to do everything we can. And if we do fail, the world ought to know who is responsible. The Soviet Union ought never again to be allowed to masquerade as an agent of liberation, of equality and respect for national sovereignty.

Or self-determination. In Afghanistan, the Soviets are actively participating in military operations to suppress a popular uprising against a Moscow-line government intent on forcing "modernization" on an unwilling people. The Soviets have just sent 5000 more combat troops into the country, bringing the total to 10,000 according to US estimates. Military movements inside the Soviet Union suggest that even more may be added. The Soviet troops so far are not fully engaged in combat, but Afghan military operations are being directed by Soviet commanders and Soviet advisers are operating at the company level.

In spite of Soviet assistance and modern weaponry, Afghan forces reportedly have not been able to put down the rebellion of Moslem tribesmen armed only with out-of-date rifles, occasional captured Soviet automatic weapons, and armor. US officials say that the regime controls about half the country by night. The Afghan army is said to be demoralized and suffering

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defections to the rebel side.

In some respects, Afghanistan is the mirror-image of Iran. Instead of a pro-American shah trying to force secularizaton, emancipation of women, and central government on a traditionalist society, a socialist government in Afghanistan has attempted that thankless task. But whereas the United States rightly demurred from the direct intervention to support its ally, the Soviet Union has plunged in, using the instruments of modern warfare to impose its will.

This is the first recent case in which the Soviets have decided to use their combat forces outside their own territory or that of a satellite. The Afghan operation seems to signal a new Soviet aggressiveness in the so-called "arc of crisis." A Soviet victory would send a chilling message throughout the region: power counts, and the Soviet Union is willing to use it.

The American response to the Soviet intervention has been a series of diplomatic maneuvers and expressions of "concern," which the Soviets have shaken off without trouble. What the situation calls for, at a minimum, is exposure: a calling of the world's attention to Soviet military adventurism in the face of popular resistance.

There is more America can do. To begin with, an expansion of US propaganda activities throughout the region could help make it clear to Islamic peoples that the Soviet Union is an enemy of religious values. The airwaves are filled with the anti-American vituperations of the Ayatollah Khomeini, and Soviet radio broadcasts from Baku are reinforcing the message. Yet the Voice of America is broadcasting only two hours a day in Farsi, variations of which are spoken in Iran and Afghanistan.

The United States also should be helping to bolster the government of Pakistan and to encourage Pakistan and India to put aside their undying mutual hatred in order to address the Soviet danger. Cambodia and Afghanistan are countries where Soviet or Soviet-assisted military activity is being used against the values and aspirations that the world community claims to respect. It may be that the Soviets will prevail in both places, leaving a heap of dead bodies in the process. The United States should not allow Soviet violations to go unnoticed by the world.

Scoop says Santa's bluffing. Let's hope so.

Santa at the Pentagon

President Carter's decision to raise the defense budget by more than 25 percent over inflation in the next five years should be greeted with the skepticism appropriate to conversions made under duress. Barely two months ago the administration was still insisting that a three percent real increase each year would be plenty, and even that increase had come only in response to pressure from NATO allies. But things have changed in the last two months. Fifty Americans have been taken hostage by the government of Iran. The public mood has taken a turn for the bellicose. And the defeat of Carter's SALT II treaty in the Senate has grown more likely and more imminent.

Still, the announcement came as something of a surprise, all the more because candidate Carter had promised in 1976 to cut the defense budget by as much as $10 billion. Some suspicious souls in the Senate proved eager to express doubt about the president's sincerity. "Is this a quick fix that will disappear the moment we've voted on SALT?" Henry Jackson demanded. Defense Secretary Harold Brown assured Jackson that "this budget was not put together to save SALT." History will not record what efforts were required by senators to stifle their snickers at this solemn pronouncement. But the Carter administration is unconcerned about the carping of irredeemable SALT opponents like Jackson. Carter knows that some senators will now find it much less risky to vote for SALT, since they will be able to point to a hefty boost in the Pentagon budget as evidence of proper concern about threats from the Soviet Union and elsewhere. After the president's speech, majority whip Alan Cranston said as many as 15 senators "could be moved in a favorable direction" on SALT by the higher defense budget. That leaves Carter still several votes short of the 67 needed for ratification, but it gives him at least a fighting chance.

But if Carter's reversal invites skepticism, it also should evoke dismay. It may turn out that Carter is serious about raising military spending after all. The ostensible reasoning behind the increase is, to put it mildly, confused. In his testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee, Brown stressed the need to keep up with the Russians. "The amount that the United States is spending on national defense is smaller in real terms than what we were spending in 1963," he noted. "Real Soviet spending for defense, however, has nearly doubled in that time. . . . We cannot allow the trend to continue without risking military inferiority." Here two points should be made. The first is that the picture Brown paints is not an accurate one. The US has made great improvements in its strategic forces. We have more than doubled the number of nuclear warheads and bombs since 1969, giving us nearly twice as many as the Soviets. We have made our missiles much more accurate, effectively tripling the likelihood of knocking out a given Soviet missile silo. We have begun developing the cruise missile, which will make the expensive Russian air defenses practically useless.

But even if the US were in danger of falling behind the Soviets, this new budget would not do much to solve the problem. The administration has not provided details about where all this additional money will be

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spent, but it has said that no significant amount of it will be devoted to strategic programs—those aimed at deterring or waging a nuclear war with the Soviet Union. Almost all of the money is expected to go to conventional (non-nuclear) military purposes. And only a small part of this will be used to buttress our defenses in Europe, the most likely site of a conventional war with the Soviet Union. If the reason for more defense spending is that the Russians are posing a greater threat than before, as Brown suggests, then it makes no sense to increase spending on programs that don't address the Russian threat.

The administration also makes the common mistake of equating the amount of money spent on defense with the quality of defense. As France learned with its very expensive Maginot Line, this can be a fatal error. What we spend on defense is less important than what we buy.

What Carter wants to buy doesn't look so good. Carter and Brown apparently have several things in mind. The most notable is a "rapid deployment force" to permit quick US intervention in trouble spots outside of Europe. Carter tied this implicitly to the seizure of our embassy in Tehran, arguing that "we must be prepared to deal with hostile actions against our citizens or our vital interests." What he tactfully neglected to mention is that this strike force would be of no use whatever in a crisis like the present one in Iran. The US already has the ability to send in a contingent of Marines to free the embassy; we lack only the means to prevent the slaughter of the hostages. The rapid deployment force unfortunately would not be rapid enough to prevent it either. When questioned, a Pentagon spokesman conceded the force would be useless in Iran: "It's a force for use if, say, country X in the Persian Gulf is worried about an invasion by a neighbor. The Marines could be on the ground in two or three or four days." The list of likely countries fitting that scenario begins and ends with Saudi Arabia. In the wake of the Tehran incident and the seizure of the mosque in Mecca, the Saudis want new evidence of our willingness to stick by them. But we have no mutual defense treaty with Saudi Arabia. If the Carter administration thinks we should be preparing to go to war on behalf of a feudal Arab monarchy solely to protect our access to Saudi oil, it should say so. This is not a view universally held among Americans.

The Carter administration proposes two major projects to make the rapid deployment force a reality. It wants a new fleet of logistics ships to be stationed near likely trouble spots, carrying enough heavy equipment and supplies to sustain a Marine invasion for 30 days. And it wants a new fleet of cargo airplanes to carry tanks and other heavy gear to the site of the invasion. It isn't clear that we need either of these; it is clear, however, that we don't need both. Hawkish senator Richard Russell shot down the idea of "prepositioning ships" 12 years ago when Lyndon Johnson first proposed it, making the reasonable argument—still revelent—that if we have the ships, we very well might use them. In any case, building a new fleet of these ships should relieve us of the need to build a new cargo airplane. The reason heavy equipment needs to be kept near where it would be used is that transporting it over long distances (by either sea or air) simply takes too long. Planes just aren't big enough to carry a lot of tanks. If they were, we wouldn't need to place tanks on logistics ships near countries prone to instability. But here again Carter is suggesting better and quicker means for intervening in foreign countries without confronting the question of whether such intervention is likely to be either morally defensible or practically effective.

Of the remainder of the budget increase, some of it looks wise and some not. The administration says it will step up spending on mundane items like spare parts, maintenance, and training. Almost everyone agrees that this increase is badly needed, since this type of spending has stayed roughly stable in recent years, even as weapons systems have become increasingly complex, requiring more frequent repairs and more training time. But the increase also includes new funds for such questionable projects as building a new anti-submarine frigate, which promises to be a poor match for modern submarines, and buying more A-10 tactical air fighters.

More crucial, however, is the administration's insistence on increasing spending in all these areas without cutting other projects that either add little to our military power (such as huge Trident nuclear submarine, which has grown from a SALT bargaining chip into a monstrosity costing more than a billion dollars a throw), or else serve mainly to escalate the arms race (such as the MX missile, which will give us a first-strike capacity and thus give the Soviets good reason to attack first in a crisis). Certainly the Pentagon budget may need more money for some things, but there is no shortage of places where funds could be cut safely. Unfortunately the people who need reassurance—the Senate, the Saudis—don't care much about finding ways to offset these increases, or for that matter about justifying the increases themselves. The public, which will have to bear the cost of this expensive decision, should care.

Stephen Chapman

Federalism as a protection racket.

Sorry States

Forty-eight years ago Justice Brandeis made his famous comment praising the American arrangement of semiautonomous states within a federal system as an incubator of progressive government: "It is one of the

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happy incidents of the federal system that a single courageous State may . . . serve as a laboratory; and try novel social and economic experiments without risk to the rest of the country." Sadly, recent economic and political trends have stood Brandeis's argument on its head. State autonomy in the economic sphere, which he supported as progressive, has become one of the most reactionary influences on contemporary public policy.

The reason is the competition for industry in which most governors and legislatures feel compelled to engage—either for the economic survival of their states, or for their own political survival. Since large industry is dominated by national and multinational corporations, business people have convinced politicians that while state lines are fixed, capital is entirely mobile. According to this widely held view, among the factors that most influence where that mobile capital will come to rest are the level and structure of state taxation; the degree of union activity within a state; and state regulatory policy in areas from pollution control to employment rights for the handicapped.

In terms of Brandeis's metaphor, the states still exist as separate laboratories, and they retain the legal right to experiment that he helped win for them in the 1930s. But the right is atrophying because the experimental subjects—private businesses—have convinced state officials that corporations will flee their jurisdictions rather than submit to any innovative efforts to regulate their activities or redistribute their wealth. Trying "novel economic and social experiments" in this context is like trying to isolate carcinogens in a Walt Disney movie, with the talking rats telling you to stuff your saccharine because they can get all the sugar they want in the nice laboratory across the street.

Unlike Brandeis's experiments in progressivism, which he believed could be conducted "without risk to the rest of the country," today's state experiments in reaction are explicitly intended to penalize the rest of the country. The purpose of giving tax and regulatory breaks to businesses is to entice them away from other states, or at least to hold onto your own in the face of other states' enticements. A recent article in the *Boston Globe* noted the satisfaction felt in Massachusetts because a new state agency had used tax-exempt bonds to bribe a national retail chain to move 209 jobs to Boston. Local pride at this accomplishment seemed undiminished by the fact that the jobs in question came from the South Bronx.

If tax rates, environmental standards, and labor rules were all set nationally, as they are in other industrialized countries, business would not be able to pit the different states against one another in this way. The tradition of state autonomy in such matters is supposed to preserve a degree of local freedom within our national system. But the mobility of big business makes this freedom somewhat illusory; the states clearly would be much better off if some of these policies were set nationwide. The states are prisoners of their own freedom. In 1976 Massachusetts voters defeated a proposal calling for flat electricity rates, to end the practice of volume discounts for large industrial users. They were persuaded that it would be economically suicidal for one state to impose such a rate structure by itself. But a year later, when the US House of Representatives put a similar proposal into its version of the 1977 energy bill, the provision was eliminated in conference with the argument that such a national policy would invade an area reserved for the states.

Most economists with whom I have discussed this problem contend that there's a flaw in the basic thesis. They say that the business community greatly exaggerates both how mobile industrial and commercial activity really is, and how much differences in state policy influence decisions about where to locate. State-imposed costs are usually a small part of the overall cost of doing business. Consequently, even 20 or 30 percent differences in these costs from state to state show up as very small blips on a corporation's fiscal radar screen. I'm convinced we can afford to be skeptical about the need to let corporate wishes shape state policy. Unfortunately, few other state officials share that skepticism. The perception that states must either adopt "pro-business" policies or suffer serious economic harm is one of the dominant influences on policymaking in much of the country, and particularly in the industrialized Northeast and Midwest.

State officials have been impressed—some even alarmed—by the significant shift of economic activity in the United States away from the Northeast and Midwest to the South and Southwest. There are complex reasons for this trend; I do not believe that industry was driven from snowbelt to sunbelt by unsympathetic state governments. But the critical political fact is that this shift of jobs and capital in a south and southwesterly direction was also, in general, a shift away from states with higher taxes, more nearly adequate welfare and unemployment compensation benefits, and tougher economic regulatory policies; and toward states with lower levels of taxes, benefits, and regulation. Many have reasoned, *post hoc ergo propter hoc.*

The effect of this on public policy is clear to see. First, it is one of the main reasons that the real incomes of welfare recipients have been falling, and will almost certainly continue to fall. The first demand of the business community in snowbelt states is for reductions in state and local spending. This usually means cutbacks in spending on human service programs. For one thing, welfare and related programs are among the largest items in any state's budget, making them a tempting target. Second, welfare recipients—especially the non-elderly—are always politically vulnerable, and especially so in today's conservative climate. Business leaders who demand reduced state spending may not wish to see welfare recipients hurt, but they rarely participate in efforts to find more humane budget cuts. Most state budgets contain plenty of socially unuseful

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spending, reflecting the political needs and preferences of elected officials. The corporate community in most states—while insisting on budget cuts—seems perfectly willing to leave the politicians on their own in deciding where to cut.

The second major effect of the business community's pressure on the states is to make state tax structures less progressive. In addition to pressing for generally lower spending and tax practices, the business community has demanded a disproportionate share of tax relief for itself, in both its corporate and its individual capacities. This campaign began with efforts to reduce corporate tax rates, and to abolish or severely reduce taxes on business inventories and sales taxes on machinery. Soon states began to offer special tax incentives to corporations willing to move in from outside, as well as to those undertaking expansions within the states where they were already located. States have used their rights to sell federally tax-exempt bonds to help finance corporate expansion. And special state tax credits and deductions for firms adding to their employment rolls or productive capacity have also become widespread.

These reductions have done more than simply reduce the amount of money available for general government purposes. These tax concessions to businesses have helped bring about the public mood that has brought us Proposition 13 and its imitators. The proportion of state and local taxes paid by individuals has increased sharply as a consequence of the reductions offered to corporations. As Bob Kuttner wrote in the *Washington Post*, "the tax revolt in 1978 was created largely by business tax relief at the expense of homeowners."

Tax relief for corporate entities has waned in popularity recently as some economists have attacked the economic assumption on which it rests, pointing out how small a part of business expense state taxes represent. But in its stead has come an explicit demand by the business sector and its allies that individual taxation in the states be made less progressive than it now is (usually not very progressive). This argument is used most effectively in the northeastern states, which want to replace heavy manufacturing with economic activity more suited to their climates, lack of energy sources and resources, and remoteness from transportation lines. This sort of activity—for example, high technology manufacturing and major financial institutions—employs fewer people than auto- or steel-making, but pays significantly higher wages to those it does employ.

Since they use relatively little in the way of raw materials or energy, labor costs are a major concern to these firms, and their argument is that the high cost of living in the northeastern states forces them to pay uncompetitively high wages to attract the employees they need. The solution, these states are told, is to reduce taxes in the higher brackets, so that young engineers and managers can afford to live in the Northeast.

This focus on the economic plight of middle management and high technology manufacturing employees creates another potent second order effect. It makes it unlikely that much will be done on the state level to alleviate the plight of big cities. One of the most serious causes of urban distress in Massachusetts, for example, is our disastrously high rate of property taxation. For years it has been the goal of most students of the state's economy to lower these rates, which have their most pernicious social and economic effects in older, larger cities. Some real gains were made in this direction in the past five years, but they are now endangered by the view that economic salvation rests with continued development of computer industries—which are located almost exclusively in the suburbs.

The third impact of the competition for industry is in the regulatory area. Environmental rules, consumer protection, protection of employment rights for minorities, pregnant women, gays, and the handicapped, all face very serious political obstacles today from corporate leaders who threaten to move out of the state if they are hedged in with any more restraints. This happens in both the industrialized states, which seek to stop their economic losses, and in the sunbelt, where it is argued that regulatory policies that might discourage new arrivals must be avoided. Many of the changes we expected to accompany increased industrialization in the South and Southwest have been thwarted by precisely this tactic. The most glaring example relates to labor unions. One of the major advantages enjoyed by the sunbelt states, according to business leaders, is their relative freedom from organized labor; and the southern and southwestern state governments have worked hard to keep things this way. "One thing that attracts business to the state is the fact that we don't have many labor unions," one North Carolina state senator said in opposition to a proposal he saw as a threat to his state's economic growth. The proposal in question was not to change the state's labor laws, but simply to open what the *New York Times* described as "a center for labor education and research" at North Carolina Central University. The *Times* went on to report that his opposition to this effort was widely shared by other legislators, in response to overwhelming opposition from the North Carolina business community.

The only way to prevent the interstate competition for industry from continuing to exert a powerful downward pull on public services is to reassert the moral and economic case for a strong federal government. This does not mean an end to state policy freedom. It does mean that as long as certain critical national policy questions—such as income transfer policy, and the right of labor to bargain collectively—are left substantially to the states, these questions will be decided not on their merits but on the basis of corporate blackmail.

Of course tax reduction is not automatically an

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illegitimate policy choice, and those who wish to reduce further the real incomes of welfare recipients have every right to make their case. But these policies ought to have to be defended on their merits—that is, on the basis of some notion about how our national resources should be divided between the public and private sectors. Today, in state after state, the debate is rigged. The argument that carries the day is simply that we can't afford to be nicer to the poor than Texas, nor more progressive in our tax structure than New Hampshire.

A few simple reforms would solve the problem: A national welfare plan, and uniform levels of unemployment and workmen's compensation benefits (suitably adjusted for regional living cost differences); a uniform national policy toward labor unions; an end to the use of federal tax subsidies and exemptions by states seeking to lure away one another's industry; a comprehensive national health plan. These are the essential elements of a national policy that would preserve legitimate state autonomy over a very wide range of issues, without allowing the business community to use the leverage of its real or pretended mobility to impose its particular conservative policy preferences. Justice Brandeis was right in his day. But today his laboratories are acting more like massage parlors.

Barney Frank

Barney Frank is a Massachusetts state legislator.

More adventures in Iranian diplomacy.

A Death in Tehran

If American vice-consul Robert Whitney Imbrie had been in a reflective mood on his sight-seeing ride through Tehran the morning of July 18, 1924, he could have looked back upon 40 years of steady achievement and forward to a promising future. Educated at the Friends' School in Washington, DC, George Washington University, and Yale Law School, Robert Imbrie had gone on to practice law, explore the Congo, win 10 decorations in French service during the Great War, write a book, and hold American diplomatic posts in Finland, Russia, and Turkey. Married a year and a half to a bright, well-connected woman named Katherine Gillespie, and armed with commendations for his diplomatic reportage on two revolutions, he seemed to have a brilliant career in the State Department ahead of him.

Imbrie had only been in Iran, then called Persia, about two months before that Friday morning. American interests in this country—whose major exports to the US were rugs, quince seeds, and pistachio nuts—were anything but vital; but the Teapot Dome scandal and an oil shortage scare had focused some attention on Jersey Standard's and Sinclair's attempts to negotiate petroleum concessions there. Persia was seething in regional and sectarian unrest. Prime Minister Reza Khan, an unlettered former commander of the Persian cossacks who had been instrumental in sweeping aside the previous government in 1921, seemed now to be losing some of the political initiative to opposition forces. Persia's Shi'ite clergy, led in parliament by an aged *mujtahid*, Seyid Hassan, were the most vocal of these opponent groups. Already that summer, there had been serious riots against the Persian minority that followed the Bahai sect. Imbrie himself had intervened to protect two American Bahai women from assailants in the bazaar a few days before. The most important Shi'ite observances of the year were only two weeks away, and popular feelings were running high.

Throughout Persia's capital, it was the custom for pious citizens to set up drinking places outside their homes to provide water for passersby. One such fountain, at the corner of Agha Sheikh Hadi and Makhsous streets in downtown Tehran, was reputed to have especially miraculous powers. Legend had it that a Bahai, refusing an invitation to drink there to the memory of a Shi'ite martyr, immediately had been struck blind. The crowds that gathered there daily increased as the feast days of Moharrem approached. Imbrie's carriage reached the spot at about noon that Friday, just as the faithful were being called to prayer.

When Imbrie stepped down, camera in hand, to observe the scene, the crowd made menacing noises. On the advice of a nearby policeman, Imbrie and another American from the legation returned to the carriage as the cry arose, "They are Bahais! They have poisoned the fountain!" As the carriage made off, the crowd rushed after it. Within minutes, the Americans were careening down the street in the direction of central police headquarters, pursued by a running press of people which grew to mob proportions as it gathered adherents along the way. Twice stopped by police, the carriage was twice allowed to proceed, the mob gaining all the while. Cries of "Stop that carriage! The infidels have murdered two soliders and two women at the Sagha Khaneh!" rang out from behind.

The terrified driver felt some relief as police headquarters and the city garrison's parade ground came into view down Sepah Street. But when soldiers finally brought the carriage to a halt, the mob surged over it like a wave. Imbrie's American companion made it through the parade ground gate, only to be beaten unconscious by garrison soldiers using the butts of their rifles. Imbrie was pulled from the carriage and vanished beneath a sea of fists, stones, cudgels, and cossack sabres. Dazed, but still somehow alive, he was helped by policemen first into a nearby tea house and, when the crowd tore that small building's roof off, to the police hospital.

The mob had now grown into the thousands. Tehran's police were under orders from the prime

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minister not to exacerbate religious tensions by firing into crowds, as they had been accustomed to doing. This mob was in any event led by cossacks and other elements of the elite Pahlavi Regiment, the prime minister's own, and the policemen were loath to tangle with them. Urged on by the chanted exhortations of a Shi'ite cleric, the mob pressed against the hospital. Windows and doors gave way, as did the desultory resistance of a few policemen.

When the mob's vanguard smashed into the operating room, Imbrie was naked upon a table, doctors stitching his wounds. In their consuming fury, the attackers beat him with anything available, even chairs and heavy tiles ripped from the floor. Then, their passions spent, they retired to the cheers of their compatriots in the street.

Imbrie stayed conscious until the end of his ordeal. His last recorded words were a request that policemen be stationed by the shattered operating room door. A guard was posted in time to eject his wife moments after she arrived. Suffering more than a hundred wounds, Robert W. Imbrie died of shock and loss of blood about four hours after he began his sight-seeing drive through Tehran. The other American and the driver survived.

To escape the searing heat of mid-summer, the American legation removed itself every year to a building about seven miles from the city. The consulate had no telephone. It was several hours before the legation chief notified the State Department of Imbrie's death, and there were weeks of contradictory cables before Washington got an accurate description of the outrage. Reza Kahn, however, wasted no time before he declared martial law. Order in Tehran now became the responsibility of the Pahlavi Regiment, and the prime minister's political fortunes turned for the better.

Rumors circulated that the incident had been the result of a British plot, a Jewish plot, a Bolshevik plot, and oil intrigues. The old cleric at the head of the opposition maintained that it had been part of Reza Khan's plan to consolidate power. Irate Americans demanded the dispatch of US gunboats to teach the Persians a lesson. State Department officials worried over the American delay in making a strong response.

When it came, US action was mild by the standards of the day and the gravity of the case. The United States had "no wish to offend a friendly government or to require punitive reparations," the State Department's official note read, but was "insistent that full reparation should be made." The US response took the form of five demands: 1) an official apology by the Persian government; 2) a $60,000 indemnity for Imbrie's widow and $3000 for his American companion in the carriage; 3) appropriate honors for Imbrie's remains to be rendered by the highest Persian military ranks; 4) $110,000 to cover the cost of sending the USS *Trenton* to retrieve the body; and 5) punishment of the guilty. The Persians quickly acceded to all the US demands, and thanked their lucky stars Imbrie had not been a British or Russian diplomat.

Reza Khan was prompt in meeting the first four demands, but vacillated on the fifth. With the establishment of martial law, hundreds of arrests were made. Soldiers, bazaar merchants, and laborers had been involved in the killing. An army transport private and the 14-year-old son of a vendor and laborer were promptly produced as the most serious offenders. Under American pressure, the trial of the cleric who had harangued the crowd and led the attack on the hospital could not be avoided. A military tribunal sentenced the three to death. State Department officials questioned the wisdom of executing a 14-year-old but, on the advice of experts that this was a mature age in "the East," decided it was acceptable as long as it did not appear to the American press that the department had urged it. Eventually, 30 other participants were sentenced to hard labor and flogging.

American officials in Tehran and Washington insisted, however, that responsible senior army officers be punished. Since the good will of military commanders was the basis of the prime minister's power, a third lieutenant was chosen to be degraded, beaten, and banished.

The executions were long delayed. First there was the holy month of Moharrem, Reza Kahn insisted, then the holy month of Safar, then a Moslem injunction that no more than one man could be executed for the death of another. The Persian chargé d'affaires in Washington, Bagher Kazemi, was called up before the State Department's chief for Near Eastern affairs and severely dressed down on more than one occasion for his government's failure to carry out the death sentences. The Persians were reminded of the murder of an American missionary in 1904, and the Persian government's failure to fulfill its promises to punish the guilty then.

The army private was the first to go. After more delays, the other two also went before firing squads. By January 1925, President Coolidge could tell Congress that the worst culprits had been executed.

Some participants in the Imbrie affair went on to bigger and better things. Prime Minister Reza Kahn had himself named Reza Shah, first (and second-to-last) of the Pahlavi dynasty, a year and a half after he declared martial law in Tehran. The State Department's chief for Near Eastern affairs, Allen Dulles, went to become head of the CIA; one of the highlights of his tenure there was to restore Reza Khan's son to the Peacock Throne in 1953. Persian chargé d'affaires Kazemi, whom Dulles humiliated in 1924, never forgot the insult. As foreign minister in 1936, Kazemi withdrew his country's diplomatic representation from the US, ostensibly over a minor traffic incident involving an Iranian diplomat in Maryland (see "First Time Farce," *TNR*, December 22).

As for Seyid Hassan, the aged *mujtahid* who led the opposition, his cause lost considerable ground with the

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elevation of Reza Shah. Concluding a report to the State Department on a 1924 conference with the Shi'ite cleric, the American chargé d'affaires in Tehran wrote: "After listening to this senile old man expatiate for one hour and a half upon his ideas as to the salvation of Persia, I was forced to reflect that, if this is the only alternative to Sardar Sepah (Reza Khan, soon to be Reza Shah) who, Heaven knows, is a weak enough reed to lean on, then God help Persia."

By order of Congress, most of the $110,000 Persian payment to the US, which was supposed to pay for sending the *Trenton* to retrieve Imbrie's remains, was set aside for the education of Persian students in American colleges and universities.

Bruce Hardcastle

Bruce Hardcastle is a Middle East specialist working in the diplomatic branch of the National Archives. This article is based on declassified State Department documents.

Black leaders trying to exploit anti-Semitism have a tiger by the tail.

Jesse and the Jews

by Charles Silberman

Most discussions of black anti-Semitism make it sound as though tension between blacks and Jews was something new. It is not. "It is common knowledge that many members of the Negro and Jewish communities of the country share mutual dislike, scorn, and mistrust," the late Ralph Bunche wrote in 1942, in the introduction to a volume analyzing the often favorable reactions of the black press to Hitler and nazism.

Mutual distrust is rooted in the American background that Jews and blacks share. As white Americans, Jews have absorbed the racial prejudice and animosity endemic to American society—indeed, to Western society as a whole. As Christian Americans, blacks have absorbed the folk anti-Semitism that is embedded in Christianity. In 1916, when he was 12, the great black educator Horace Mann Bond has recalled:

> I was walking along a street near my house, and had to pass a small grocery store located in our neighborhood. There was a small boy—perhaps six years old—looking through the picket fence that surrounded the store. As I passed he began to chant: 'nigger, nigger, nigger, nigger.' You may not believe it, but this was the first time I can remember anyone calling me a 'nigger.' And my response still surprises me; I retorted to the boy, 'You Christ-killer!'

But black anti-Semitism is more than just the mirror image of Jewish racism. There is a lack of symmetry in the relationship between blacks and Jews that gives black anti-Semitism a distinctive and troublesome cast: whereas Jewish leaders and spokesmen are considerably *less* racist (and considerably more sympathetic to black aspirations) than the Jewish population in general, the opposite is true of the black community. A recent Lou Harris survey prepared for the National Conference of Christians and Jews revealed that the members of a large sample of national black leaders were much more anti-Semitic than their followers. They were also more anti-Semitic than a sample of corporate executives.

This asymmetry is not new. "The tension between Negroes and Jews contains an element not characteristic of Negro-Gentile tension," James Baldwin wrote in 1948, "an element which accounts in some measure for the Negroes' tendency to castigate the Jew verbally more often than the Gentile, and which might lead one to the conclusion that, of all white people on the face of the earth, it is the Jew whom the Negro hates most."

That, of course, is precisely the impression that a number of black spokesmen and leaders have created by their response to Jimmy Carter's firing of Andrew Young as US ambassador to the United Nations. Even though Young was fired by Carter (his resignation was tendered about as freely as that of HEW secretary Califano a few weeks earlier), and even though black spokesmen had been increasingly critical of the Carter administration's domestic policies during the preceding months, black leaders focused their anger over Young's resignation at American Jews, rather than at the president himself. In their famous "declaration of independence" of August 22, those present at the black leadership meeting declared that "The key question before us as representatives of the Black community in America is the . . . extent to which the successful

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demand for the resignation of Ambassador Andrew Young has in fact further damaged an already unhappy relationship between the American Jewish organizational spokesmen and the rank and file and the leadership of the American blacks."

Some of the most influential black leaders have dissented from that view—most notably, Vernon Jordan, Bayard Rustin, and the other black members of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights. Without denying the real differences that exist between blacks and Jews on a few issues, such as affirmative action, Jordan and the others have emphasized the large areas of agreement between the two communities, as reflected in the legislative agenda of the Leadership Conference. Thus it would be wrong—wrong morally, as well as politically—to attribute the views of a Jesse Jackson or Wyatt T. Walker to black leaders as a whole, or to people like Vernon Jordan or Bayard Rustin in particular.

But it would be disingenuous to deny the reality or the virulence of the anti-Semitism that exploded at the black leadership meeting in August and on other occasions since then. What has happened is that new kinds of anti-Semitism have been wedded to traditional black folk anti-Semitism. This always has been more complex than white anti-Semitism. On the one hand, Jews were viewed as "Christ-killers"; on the other hand, black ministers and congregants always have identified closely with the Jews of the Old Testament—in particular, the Jews who escaped Egyptian bondage. One consequence, Bladwin has suggested, is "a subterranean assumption that the Jew should 'know better,' that he has suffered enough himself to know what suffering means. And understanding is expected of the Jews such as none but the most naive and visionary Negro has ever expected of the American Gentile." The expectation has not been met; and because more has been expected, the disappointment has been greater—and the consequent rage has been greater too.

Because American Jews are more mobile than members of other ethnic groups, moreover, northern blacks have tended to move into formerly Jewish urban and suburban neighborhoods. But because businesses are never as mobile as homeowners and tenants, blacks have come into contact with the Jews who have remained behind as landlords and merchants; and landlord-tenant relationships (as well as merchant-customer relationships in the urban ghetto) rarely foster affection on either side. Thus, direct contact has reinforced black folk anti-Semitism, not to mention Jewish racism.

In recent years, black-Jewish tensions have been exacerbated by real conflicts of interest between the two groups. To be sure, a conflict of interest between blacks and Jews is not the same—at least not necessarily the same—as anti-Semitism; but the one may lead to the other. This has happened, in good measure, because blacks have tended to choose occupational lines—most notably, teaching and social work—that Jews had chosen a generation earlier as their route to upward mobility. The result has been conflict over the criteria for appointment and promotion to supervisory jobs, and over the question of who determines those criteria. The complaints that blacks have voiced in recent years about Jewish control of the New York City school system are remarkably similar to the complaints that Jews voiced a generation or so ago, when they were struggling to enter and acquire administrative positions in a system then dominated by Irish Catholics.

There is also an apparent conflict for scarce places in medical schools, law schools, and, to a lesser degree, colleges and other professional schools. The conflict may not be real; there is remarkably little evidence about the impact of affirmative action programs on admissions to colleges and graduate and professional schools. An analysis of admissions to Columbia Law School indicates that adoption of an affirmative action program *increased* the number of Jewish students and had no significant impact on the number of black or Hispanic students. (There was a slight reduction in the number of Jewish males and a substantial increase in the number of Jewish females admitted to the law school.) But the Columbia experience may be different from the experience of state universities; and in any event, both blacks and Jews are convinced that their conflict over affirmative action is a real one.

Resentment, moreover, grows out of the complex mixture of admiration and envy with which many blacks view American Jews. "We sit on the boards of local Urban Leagues or NAACP chapters with those Jews," one black leader told me, "but when five o'clock comes, they go to their country clubs for dinner and never invite us." This is a familiar complaint—one that Jews are still making about white gentiles in many parts of the United States. To American Jews, "five o'clock shadow," as this kind of social segregation is sometimes called, is no more than a minor irritant. It is considerably more than that to middle-class blacks, who fear that they will be unable to retain the middle-class status they have gained in the last decade. Given the black experience in this country, the fear is understandable. Until recently, every time black Americans began to move up the economic ladder, blacks were thrown back—usually through violence.

In the 19th century, for example, blacks dominated the construction trades in the South, and until the 1920s they served as railroad locomotive engineers and firemen; such work was deemed too "dirty" for whites to perform. But when recession, mass immigration, or technological change made "black occupations" look attractive to whites, blacks were forced out and whites took over.

If this were all, black anti-Semitism might be a cause for mild concern, but not for real anxiety. But that is not all. Black anti-Semitism has taken a new and dangerous turn: consciously or not, a significant

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number of black civil rights spokesmen, political leaders, and intellectuals have adopted the political anti-Semitism that is now a central part of the ideology of the left.

Consider what has happened to James Baldwin himself. In his 1967 volume, *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual*, the black nationalist writer, Harold Cruse, attacked black intellectuals in general, and Baldwin in particular, for failing to recognize that their real enemy was the Jew. "It would not be correct to call Baldwin a Jew-lover," Cruse wrote; "it is that Baldwin simply loves everybody. More exactly, he fits the category of apologist for the Jews."

Baldwin has come a long way since then. "The state of Israel was not created for the salvation of the Jews," he wrote in the September 29 issue of the *Nation*; "it was created for the salvation of the Western interests." Baldwin's thesis is central to the ideology of the left as it has developed since 1967. Couched in the rhetoric of the so-called third world, the new view is that the nation state no longer is the principal arena for the class struggle. There is, instead, a worldwide struggle between the haves and the have-nots, with Israel being the prime symbol and example of the haves. Having been created for "the salvation of the Western interests," to use Baldwin's phrase, Israel exists only to serve those interests—and American Jews exist mainly to serve Israeli interests. As Harold Cruse put it in 1967, "They function in America as an organic part of the distant nation state—a state that is the prime symbol of colonialism, racism, and imperialism."

This same view was expressed by Joel Dreyfuss, a writer of Haitian and Jewish ancestry, in a front-page article in the August 27 issue of the *Village Voice*. "The resignation of Andrew Young is a metaphor for a struggle between competing ethnic groups, *for relationships between the haves and the have-nots here and elsewhere*, for differing visions of the future," Dreyfuss wrote. "*The conflict between Blacks and Jews reflects the fact that these two groups have made their alliances with opposing camps in an international struggle for power*" (emphasis added).

It is a short distance from this new third world rhetoric to the familiar rhetoric of classical political anti-Semitism. Radicals of this persuasion now talk of an international Zionist, i.e., Jewish, conspiracy; of the power of Jewish bankers (one of Jesse Jackson's favorite themes); of Jewish control of the mass media.

Third world rhetoric has an understandable appeal to black Americans: it makes them feel that they no longer are a minority—that they are part of a worldwide majority composed of people of color. And third world attacks on Israel and support for the PLO provide a useful tactic for the heads of civil rights organizations, such as the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and PUSH, that have lost their *raison d'être*, along with most of their constituency.

Since the legislative victories of the 1960s, in fact, black leaders have been struggling unsuccessfully to define a black agenda. That has not been easy, for the issues that affect blacks the most—economic growth, inflation, welfare reform, national health insurance, municipal finance—are not susceptible to discussion in purely racial terms. As Vernon Jordan has argued so eloquently, black interests can be served only through coalitions with other groups, particularly trade unionists and Jews.

The result has been an organizational vacuum—one that some black leaders have sought to fill through a new focus on the Middle East. Cloaked in third world rhetoric (the Palestinians are "the niggers of the Middle East," Zionism is an instrument of racism and colonialism, Israel is making black people suffer by "making" the Arabs increase the price of gasoline and heating oil), support for the PLO and opposition to Israel and to "Zionism" is giving some black spokesmen the "race issue" for which they have been searching.

There is danger that through sheer repetition, anti-Semitic rhetoric will come to be accepted by decent people in both the white and black communities. There is reason to fear that Americans who are not anti-Semitic themselves are becoming more tolerant of other people's expressions of anti-Semitism. And this legitimization of anti-Semitic rhetoric, in turn, may be lifting the cover on the anti-Semitism that others had retained, however unconsciously, but had kept suppressed.

The greatest danger may be more immediate: the strange alliance that seems to be forming between the left and the right. What was disturbing about John Connally's National Press Club speech was not the specific views he expressed about the Middle East; it was his use of code words suggesting an intent to campaign against the Jews. What else did Connally intend—what else could he have intended—when he argued that the United States must "now" base its foreign policy on "American interests"? Conally argued not only that Israel was threatening peace in the Middle East, but that Israeli actions were also threatening to tear the American social fabric. "The tension between black and Jewish communities," Connally said, "is only the latest in a series of conflicts that could, in time, impinge upon the integrity of our own society."

If anything is likely to impinge upon American society, it is anti-Semitism. Blacks who turn to it for temporary advantage will find they have a tiger by the tail. Political anti-Semitism is not simply an expression of prejudice. Because of the millennia of hatred and destructiveness to which anti-Semitism is linked, not to mention its consequences in our own time, any use of political anti-Semitism goes beyond shouting "fire" in a crowded theater; it runs the danger of lighting the fire itself. And in that fire, blacks, no less than Jews, are bound to be burned. For all the real and imagined conflicts of interests between blacks and Jews, members of both groups have a common interest in maintaining a society in which prejudice and hatred play a declining, rather than increasing, role.

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The Soviet Union's greatest mythological figure is 100 years old this week.

Stalin's Afterlife

by Stephen F. Cohen

It has been called the "accursed question," like serfdom in prerevolutionary Russia. Stalin ruled the Soviet Union for a quarter of a century, from 1929 to his death at the age of 73 in 1953. For most of these years, he ruled as an unconstrained autocrat, making the era his own—*Stalinshchina*, the time of Stalin. The nature of his rule and the enduring legacy of Stalinism have been debated in the Soviet Union for more than another quarter of a century, first in the official press and since the mid-1960s in *samizdat*. And yet it remains the most tenacious and divisive issue in Soviet political life.

Stalinism was, to use a Soviet metaphor, two towering and inseparable mountains: a mountain of national accomplishments alongside a mountain of crimes. The accomplishments cannot be dismissed. During the first decade of Stalin's leadership, memorialized officially as the period of the first and second five-year plans for collectivization and industrialization, a mostly backward, agrarian, illiterate society was transformed into a predominantly industrial, urban, and literate one with many of the benefits of a modern welfare state. For millions of people the 1930s were a time of willingly heroic sacrifice, educational opportunity, and upward mobility. In the second decade of Stalin's rule, the Soviet Union destroyed the mighty German invader, contributing more than any other nation to the defeat of fascism; it also acquired an empire in Eastern Europe, and became a superpower in world affairs.

But the crimes were no less mountainous. Stalin's system of mass terror—arrests, torture, deportations, and executions by the NKVD or MGB (as the political police was variously known), and the murderous forced labor camps of the Gulag archipelago—victimized tens of millions of innocent men, women, and children for more than 20 years. Judged only by the number of victims, and leaving aside the important differences between the two regimes, Stalin's policies created a holocaust greater than Hitler's. Twenty million deaths resulted from his forcible collectivization of the peasantry in 1929-33 and the terror that continued almost unabated against officialdom and society alike until 1953. This figure does not include millions of unnecessary casualties that can be blamed on Stalin's negligent leadership at the beginning of World War II, or the eight million souls (a conservative estimate) who languished in Soviet concentration camps every year between 1939 and 1953.

Yet today most Soviet officials and ordinary citizens, probably the great majority, still speak mostly, or even only, good of Stalin. It is true, of course, that official censorship has deprived many citizens of a full, systematic account of what happened. But much of the story did appear, however elliptically, in Soviet publications by the mid-1960s. Moreover, most adult survivors must have known or sensed the magnitude of the holocaust, since virtually every family lost a relative, friend, or acquaintance. Why then don't most people share the unequivocal judgment once pronounced, even in censored Soviet publications, that "there is no longer any place in our soul for a justification of his evil deeds"?

Two categories of Soviet citizens had an intensely personal interest in the Stalin question after 1953: victims of the terror and those who had victimized them. Most of the victims were dead, but many remained to exert pressure on high politics. Millions of people had survived—some for 20 years or more—in the camps and in remote exile. Most of these, perhaps seven or eight million, were freed after Stalin's death. They began to return to society, first in a trickle in 1953 and then in a mass exodus in 1956. To salvage what remained of their shattered lives, the returnees required, and demanded, many forms of rehabilitation—legal exoneration, family reunification, housing, jobs, medical care, pensions. Their demands were shared by millions of relatives of those who had perished in the terror. The community of victims had direct and indirect access to the high leadership. Returnees from the camps became members, and even heads, of various party commissions set up after 1953 to investigate the Gulag system, the question of rehabilitations, and specific crimes of the Stalin years. Quite a few returnees resumed high positions in military, economic, scientific, and cultural life. Some returnees had personal access to repentant Stalinists in the leadership (such as Khrushchev), whom they lobbied and influenced. And other returnees, such as Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, made their impact in different ways.

Their adversaries were no less self-interested, and far more powerful. The systematic victimization of so many people had implicated millions of other people during the 20-year terror. These included Politburo members who directed the terror alongside Stalin,

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party and state officials who had participated in the repressions, hundreds of thousands of NKVD personnel who arrested, tortured, executed, and guarded prisoners, and the plethora of petty informers and slanderers who fed on the crimson madness. Millions of other people were implicated by having profited (often inadvertently) from the misfortune of victims. They inherited the positions, apartments, possessions, and sometimes even the wives of the vanished. Generations built lives upon a holocaust. The remote specter of retribution was enough to unite millions who had committed crimes, and also those who only felt some unease about their lives, against any revelations about the past.

Unavoidably, Stalin became a symbol for both the friends and foes of change, reformers and conservatives inside the Soviet bureaucracy. Khrushchev set the pattern in the 1950s. His official de-Stalinization efforts after 1956 were stymied by deeply ingrained popular attitudes. The expression "cult of Stalin's personality" became, after 1953, an official euphemism for Stalinism, but it had a powerful resonance. For more than 20 years, Stalin had been glorified publicly in grotesquely extreme ways. His name, words, and alleged deeds were trumpeted at every level and in every corner of the country. His photographed, painted, bronzed, and sculpted likeness were everywhere. The cult became a religious phenomenon. When the government assaulted the Stalin cult, first obliquely and then with revelations that portrayed "the father of the peoples" as a genocidal murderer, it caused a crisis of faith. For every person who repudiated Stalin and what he represented, there were others who could not make the psychological adjustment.

By removing the autocrat who had dominated the system, Stalin's death was the first act of de-Stalinization. It also dealt an irreparable blow to the divinity of the cult: gods do not suffer brain hemorrhages, enlargement of the heart, and high blood pressure. The second important act of de-Stalinization came from the people who had been most constantly vulnerable to the terror: those who had risen highest under it. Khrushchev spoke for the whole ruling elite when he said "All of us around Stalin were temporary people." Even Politburo membership had provided no protection. Several had been shot, one as recently as 1950; the wife of another (Molotov) was in prison camp; and the whole Politburo had come under Stalin's morbid suspicion toward the end. The experience of living so long under a terroristic and capricious ruler united his successors (except one), probably for the last time, on a major reform: the partial dismantling of the powerful terror machine and the restoration of the Communist party to primacy in the political system. By April 1953, Stalin's last terror scenario, the "Doctors' Plot," had been disavowed. By June the political police had been brought under party control; the chief, Lavrenti Beria, had been arrested along with a few henchmen; and a few hundred prominent camp inmates had been released.

None of these partial repudiations of the past extended publicly to Stalin himself, except by inference. The revised version of his official reputation that emerged in 1953-54, and prevailed until 1956, was still highly laudatory. Though no longer the "driver of the locomotive of history," Stalin was still the "great continuer of V. I. Lenin's immortal cause" who had led the party and the country in all victories since the 1930s, including the destruction of "enemies of the Party and of the people." But this reformulation of Stalin's greatness was unstable. Stalin's reduced status ironically posed a grave danger for his successors by elevating Marxism-Leninism and the party system to joint responsibility with him for all of the deeds of the past, including the bad ones.

The era of official anti-Stalinism began the night of February 24-25, 1956, with Khrushchev's dramatic "secret" speech to a closed session of the 20th Party Congress. Speaking for four hours before about 1500 hastily reassembled delegates, in effect the country's ruling elite, Khrushchev delivered a stunning blow to the official myth of Stalin as a great and benevolent leader. He assailed Stalin's autocratic rule with vividly detailed accounts of the dictator's personal responsibility for "mass repressions," torture, "monstrous falsifications," and his own glorification. And he flatly blamed Stalin for a succession of Soviet disasters in World War II. Khrushchev's words, spiked with long quotations from pleading, agonized letters written by tortured victims in their jail cells, were plain and rarely euphemistic. Nor was the speech really secret. Although never published in the Soviet Union, it was read to thousands of official meetings across the country over the next few weeks. Its general contents became widely known.

But Khrushchev's indictment of the dead tyrant was sharply limited in three ways. Its gravamen was Stalin's dictatorial regime over the party and his "mass terror against party cadres" and other political elites; it maintained silence about the millions of ordinary people who had perished. Second, Khrushchev dated Stalin's criminal misdeeds from 1934. This left out Stalin's forcible collectivization of 1929-33. Finally, Khrushchev avoided the question of widespread criminal responsibility and punishment by defining the abuses narrowly in terms of Stalin and a small "gang" of accomplices, who already were exposed and punished.

Nevertheless, reports of Khrushchev's denunciation of "mass repressions" were enough to trigger shock waves across the Soviet empire in Eastern Europe and tumultuous dissension elsewhere in the international communist movement. These events brought a strong reaction in high Soviet circles against Khrushchev's radical revelations and led to a still more "balanced" evaluation when the first public resolution on the Stalin question, adopted by the Central Committee on June 30, finally appeared on July 2, 1956. Though

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eclipsed in the early 1960s, this document was resuscitated by Khrushchev's successors more than 10 years later. The long resolution condemned the "harmful consequences of the cult of personality," but in terms so euphemistic and self-defensive that Stalin's "many lawless deeds" seemed to add up to little more than "certain serious mistakes," which, the resolution implied, were "less important against the background of such enormous successes. . . ." Further shock waves of anti-Stalinism, especially the uprisings in Poland and Hungary in October and November 1956, reinforced this considerable rehabilitation of Stalin's reputation. Within a year, Khrushchev himself was promoting the "two sides" of Stalin, of which the "positive" now seemed ascendant.

Meanwhile, the past continued to generate anti-Stalinist heat outside the apparatuses of power. Millions of camp inmates freed since 1956 were now visible, and sometimes clamorous, reminders of the holocaust. Khrushchev's 1956 speech had roused a segment of the intelligentsia. A more dramatic cultural "thaw" in 1956-57 allowed guarded public discussion of past Stalinist abuses and existing ones. The "camp theme," as it later became known, forced its way tentatively but persistently into Soviet fiction and poetry in the character of the vanished and the returnee. Names unmentioned for decades crept slowly back into textbooks, monographs, encyclopedias, journals, and newspapers, though the fate of their possessors was mentioned only elliptically. All of these ghosts were loose in the country by 1960-61.

drawing of Stalin by Vint Lawrence

A repentant Stalinist himself, Khrushchev seemed always divided on the Stalin question, even in the memoirs he dictated privately after his fall, hating and admiring Stalin almost in the same breath, rounding on radical anti-Stalinists whom he had previously encouraged. But ultimately Khrushchev's resolve "to root out this evil" grew and gained the upper hand. "Some people are waiting for me to croak in order to resuscitate Stalin and his methods," he said in 1962. "This is why, before I die, I want to destroy Stalin and destroy those people, so as to make it impossible to put the clock back."

Khrushchev and his supporters unveiled a second, and more radical, version of official anti-Stalinism at the 22nd Party Congress in October 1961. The assault on the Stalin cult at the 22nd Congress differed from Khrushchev's speech at the 20th Congress in important ways. Above all, it was public. For almost two weeks during the anniversary month of the October revolution, daily newspapers and broadcasts riveted public attention on "monstrous crimes" and demands for "historical justice," as speaker after speaker related lurid details of mass arrests, torture, and murder that had been carried out in every region of the country. Impassioned Party Congress resolutions ordered Stalin's body removed from the Lenin Mausoleum on Red Square and stripped his name from thousands of towns, buildings, and monuments across the country. The criminal indictment of Stalin's rule was so harsh and sweeping that it obscured his "positive side" altogether.

Most dramatically, Khrushchev and his allies at the Congress made criminal accusations against living political figures, implying the possibility of trials for crimes of the past. The specter of such trials, inflated by references to "numerous documents in our possession" and Khrushchev's call for "a thorough and comprehensive study of all such cases rising out of the abuse of power," sent tremors of fear through the thousands, or millions, who bore "direct personal responsibility."

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Anti-Stalinists took full advantage of the new dispensation. Virtually every criticism of Stalinism that appeared later in *samizdat* was anticipated in official publications of the early 1960s. The result was an impressive body of revelations about the three main episodes of Stalin's rule: collectivization, the great terror, and World War II.

Stalin's reputation as the great generalissimo of 1941-45, as he titled himself and which became the linchpin of his cult, was the most thoroughly assaulted. Successors to the military corps he had slaughtered took belated revenge. Official histories, monographs, memoirs, and novels portrayed Stalin as a leader who had decapitated the armed forces on the eve of war, who had ignored repeated warnings of the German invasion and thus left the country undefended in June 1941, who had deserted his post in panic during the first days of combat, and whose capricious strategy later caused major military disasters. The vaunted generalissimo became a criminally incompetent tyrant who bore personal responsibility for millions of casualties. For millions of veterans who had fought with Stalin's name on their lips, this part of the anti-Stalin campaign was probably the most resented. It was the first to be undone after Khrushchev's fall.

The Stalinist terror and concentration camp system inspired an even more dramatic body of historical exposé. The most famous example is Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, published in 1962. But there were many novels, short stories, biographies, memoirs, films, and plays about the terror, which produced a fairly unvarnished picture of the 20-year holocaust.

The magnitude of the unfolding picture shattered the legend that only Stalin and a few accomplices had been guilty. Publicizing the camps meant publicizing the conduct of millions. Face-to-face confrontations between victims and their former tormentors were portrayed in literature and on the stage, suggesting the menace of people who, as Yevtushenko put it, "hate this era of emptied prison camps."

If the camp theme was traumatic, the subject of the forcible collectivization of 125 million peasants in 1929-33 was potentially even more dangerous. Every thoughtful citizen knew that collectivization had been a special national tragedy; it had destroyed not only Soviet agriculture but the traditional life and culture of peasant Russia. But the legitimacy of the existing collective farm system, a still unworkable and largely unreformed foundation of the whole economic system, rested wholly on the Stalinist legend of collectivization as a spontaneous, voluntary, and benevolent process of the peasant masses themselves.

By the mid-1960s, Soviet scholars (as well as novelists of village life) had chipped away at this legend by itemizing Stalin's peremptory, coercive measures in the winter of 1929-30, which had unleashed the assault on the countryside, and by revealing suggestions of the mass violence, deportations, and famine that followed.

A sweeping reaction soon surged up against this kind of de-Stalinization. From higher reaches of power, anti-Stalinism seemed to be out of control. It was challenging the official axiom that Stalinism had been only "an alien growth" and not indigenous to the system for 20 years. By arguing that the "essence of the cult of personality is blind admiration for authority," anti-Stalinists were threatening the existing system of authoritarian control. Alarmed professional managers of the political system launched a counter-campaign, based on a "heroic-patriotic theme," for deference to authority. They denounced "dismal compilers of memoirs, who . . . unearth long-decayed literary corpses."

There was also a broad reaction against de-Stalinization from below, from decent people who were not evil neo-Stalinists but who naturally composed the Soviet conservative majority. For them, ending the terror and making limited restitutions was one thing; desecration of the past and radical reforms in the Soviet order, for which they had sacrificed so much, was quite another.

It is impossible to document the part played by the Stalin question at the Central Committee meeting that overthrew Khrushchev in October 1964. Official explanations made public at the time of his ouster did not hold de-Stalinization against him. The main charges that Khrushchev himself had grown increasingly autocratic and capricious, and that his bolder reforms were hastily conceived, were substantially true. Nevertheless, Khrushchev was brought down by a conservative swing in official and popular attitudes against his 10-year reformation, of which de-Stalinization had been a substantial part.

The powerful resurgence of pro-Stalinist sentiment since 1964 is reflected in the career of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. In 1964, he was nominated for a Lenin Prize, the Soviet Union's highest literary honor, for his prison camp story *Ivan Denisovich*; 10 years later, he was arrested and deported from the country.

At first Khrushchev's downfall encouraged both anti-Stalinists and neo-Stalinists in official circles. New anti-Stalinist publications appeared, rehabilitations of Stalin's victims continued, and in October 1965 the leadership legislated a major (and ill-fated) program of economic reform. At the same time, however, influential figures, including Brezhnev himself, began to issue authoritative statements refurbishing Stalin's reputation as a wartime leader, eulogizing the 1930s while obscuring the terror, and suggesting that Khrushchev's revelations had "calumniated" the Soviet Union. Behind the scenes, an assertive pro-Stalin lobby, proud to call itself "Stalinist," took the offensive in 1965 for the first time in several years, apparently with Brezhnev's support. Anti-Stalinists were demoted, censorship was tightened, new ideological strictures were drafted, already processed rehabilitations were challenged, and subscriptions to anti-Stalinist journals

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were prohibited in the armed forces.

The decisive battle in officialdom was over by early 1966. Within 18 months of Khrushchev's overthrow, official de-Stalinization was at an end. In February 1966, two prominent writers, Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel, were tried and sentenced to labor camps for publishing their "slanderous" (anti-Stalinist) writings abroad. The public trial, with its self-conscious evocation of the purge trials of the 1930s, was a neo-Stalinist blast against critical-minded members of the literary intelligentsia. Meanwhile a campaign began against anti-Stalinist historians.

These events gave birth to the present-day dissident movement and *samizdat* literature. The growing conservatism and neo-Stalinist overtones of the Brezhnev regime drove anti-Stalinists from official to dissident ranks and gave the movement many of its most prominent spokesmen, such as Andrei Sakharov, Roy and Zhores Medvedev, and Solzhenitsyn.

Some dissidents believed that their protests prevented a full rehabilitation of Stalin at the 23rd Party Congress in March 1966, where his name was hardly mentioned. If so, it was a small victory amidst a rout. The policies of the Brezhnev government grew into a wide-ranging conservative reaction to Khrushchev's reforms. The defense of the status quo required a usable Stalinist past. Increasingly, only the mountain of accomplishments was remembered in rewritten history books and the press.

By 1969 Stalin had been restored as an admirable wartime leader; serious criticism of collectivization was banned; rehabilitations were ended and some even undone; and intimations that there had been a great terror grew scant. Indeed, people who criticized the Stalinist past could now be prosecuted for having "slandered the Soviet social and state system."

Fresh from this triumph, neo-Stalinist officials began a campaign for the full rehabilitation of Stalin's reputation in connection with the 90th anniversary of his birth in December 1969. Pro-Stalin articles and novels appeared regularly throughout the year. Plans for a grand rehabilitation were aborted at the last moment. The memorial article that finally appeared in *Pravda* on December 21 was carefully balanced. It credited Stalin's "great contribution"; but it also condemned his "mistakes," which had led to "instances" of "baseless repressions." But this still marked the first official commemoration of Stalin's birthdate in 10 years. Shortly thereafter a flattering marble bust was placed on his gravesite just behind the Lenin Mausoleum.

Anti-Stalinist voices in the official press became fewer and fainter after 1969. In official mass circulation publications, Stalin's reputation soared in the 1970s. Though no longer the subject of religious worship, he became, once again, a wise statesman and benefactor of the people. Historians were told by a high official, "*all*—and I repeat, *all*—stages in the development of our Soviet society must be regarded as 'positive.'" Nor was neo-Stalinist sentiment merely an artifice manufactured above. Ordinary people began to restore privately manufactured replicas of his likeness to their homes, kiosks, and dashboards.

A coarser, more ominous form of pro-Stalinism also emerged. Some official publications—including a spate of historical novels that seem to appeal to a popular craving for real history—began to justify Stalin's terror of the 1930s as a "struggle against destructive and nihilistic elements." Epithets and ideological justifications of the terror years—"enemies of the Party and of the people," "alien elements," "fifth column," and "rootless cosmopolitans"—crept back into various kinds of literature. As the centenary of Stalin's birth approached in 1979, neo-Stalinist officials campaigned again for a full-scale official glorification unblemished by carping references to Stalin's "mistakes."

Stalinist opinion today among high officials is easy to understand. For them, the generalissimo on his pedestal continues to symbolize and protect their power. But as a broad popular phenomenon, today's pro-Stalin sentiment is something different, even an expression of discontent. It is part of the widespread resurgence of Russian nationalism, to which Stalin linked the fortunes of the Soviet state in the 1930s and 1940s, and which has reemerged today as the most potent ideological factor in Soviet political life. In this haze of nationalist sentiment, Stalin joins a long line of great Russian rulers stretching back to the early czars.

Pro-Stalin sentiment also is a reflection of contemporary problems. Liberalizing trends and other changes in the 1950s and 1960s unsettled many lives and minds; the open discussion of long-standing social problems made them seem new. By the mid-1960s, many officials and citizens saw a reformed, partially de-Stalinized Soviet Union as a country in crisis. Economic shortages, inflation, public drunkenness, escalating divorce rates, unruly children, cultural diversity, complicated international negotiations—all seemed to be evidence of a state that could no longer manage, much less control, its own society. And all cast a rosy glow on the Stalinist past as an age of efficiency, low prices, law and order, discipline, unity, stability, obedient children, and international respect.

By now there is little to counteract this revised folk version of the past. As anti-Stalinists were silenced by censorship, another generation, raised by parental followers of the cult, grew up thinking that Stalin had arrested "20 or 30 people" or "maybe 2000."

Official censorship can mute the controversy, postpone the historical reckoning, and allow another generation to come of age only dimly aware (though not fully ignorant) of what happened during the Stalin years. But events after Stalin's death demonstrate that making the past forbidden serves only to make it more alluring, and that imposing a ban on historical controversy causes that controversy to fester, intensify, and grow politically explosive.

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Books and the Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on films

Long Journeys

I was a *Star Trek* virgin. I had never seen it before it became "The Motion Picture," although of course I knew its TV fame. Before I went to the film I read some reviews, all ruthless. More ruth, please The two hours I spent with *Star Trek* were mostly pleasant.

The script is sub-zero science fiction, about a US space ship going Out There to intercept a hostile space ship of enormous power only a few days from earth. I don't understand, given the ingenuity of the best SF novels, how scripts like this and *Star Wars* can be so widely accepted. Yes, I've heard about the difference between pictures and words, but the level of sophistication of a popular genre in one medium is usually reflected in other media. The improvement in the Western novels of the 1950s seems to have seeped through to the scripts of subsequent Western films. But billions (trillions?) of people sat through *Star Wars* rapt and apparently are going to do it again with *Star Trek*, which isn't any better (as they say) scriptwise. It puts on some philosophic false beards at the end, but it's all just pre-adolescent space opera. The principal characters were all recognizable to the audience, who greeted them with applause, but it's just another naval-crew cast, modernized to include women and slightly fantasized to include a man with big ears from another planet.

Oh, well, the audience probably does, will do, has done, what I did: quickly relegated the script to the status of camp, whether it's so intended or not, like the libretto of a 19th-century "display" opera. What matter are the arias—in this case, the gadgets and the special effects. For most of its two hours *Star Trek* seemed to me lovely in this regard. (There are limits to possible variations so some pall sets in.) These special effects were the joint effort of Douglas Trumbull who worked on *2001* and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* and John Dykstra who worked on *Star Wars*. They can do SF films for me any time. A painter named Chesley Bonestell used to be the king of SF illustration when I was in the trade. Trumbull and Dykstra deal in the same kind of immense frozen blue light and great weightless shadows, and they have the ability, along with the production designer Harold Michelson, to think of new shapes for objects.

I've heard and overheard comment that *Star Trek* isn't exciting enough, hasn't got the action of *Star Wars*. Thank heaven. (Heavens?) I got tired quickly of the zapping with ray guns in *S. Wars;* and *S. Trek* has just enough basic continuing action to keep the whole show moving forward. "Show" is what it is—fashion and trade show of Neverland.

What do we want from an encyclopedia? Everything. We want it to list every person and subject in its field with every relevant fact about every entry, and with some helpful opinion besides. No. lesser an ideal can possibly serve as criterion for the compilation or the judging of an encyclopedia if it is going to be any good at all. Every encyclopedia fails, obviously, by that necessary standard, but we don't know anything about its quality without that standard.

The odd fact is that, through some perversity perhaps, this standard presses even more strongly in the case of the one-volume encyclopedia: and even *more* strongly when the one-volume encyclopedia is written by one author. It's as if the double act of daring—conciseness and sole authorship—implied special self-confidence.

The best one-volume, one-author, one-field encyclopedia that I know is *Modern World Drama* by Myron Matlaw (Dutton, discussed in *TNR*, October 21, 1972). A new good one has just been published: *The Film Encyclopedia* by Ephraim Katz (Crowell; $29.95). Need I say that I haven't read every line of its large, double-columned 1266 pages? I read the A, B, and C sections and leafed through the rest; and it seems a very useful tool. Paradoxically, part of the book's value is in its deviation from the ideal, its deliberate circumscription. Katz and his publishers decided not to include any photographs and not to deal with individual films: he has concentrated on people and on subjects. To his entries on people, he adds lists of films with which they were concerned, and he indicates whether or not the list is complete. The book needs supplementing with, say, *Dictionary of Films* by Georges Sadoul and Peter Morris (University of California, 1972); but, by and large, it compensates to a considerable degree in depth for its concentration.

The first thing in the book's favor is its design. It's a capacious size without clumsiness, and the layout of the page is inviting. (The designer was Abigail Moseley.) If you don't think design is influential, you don't know your own unconscious. Second, Katz writes well enough, sometimes a bit better than that. Third, his research has uncovered some new material, including odd facts.

(Examples of the last: Did you know that Harry Carey, the early Western star, was born in the Bronx and went to NYU? That Bill Cosby has a PhD? That the real first name of Mauritz Stiller, the

Films Worth Seeing

Apocalypse Now. The freaked-out texture of Vietnam, but not the moral drama it pretends to be.

The Electric Horseman. Light script pretending to be heavy, but some pleasant romancing between Robert Redford, ex rodeo champ, and Jane Fonda, sassy TV reporter.

Kramer vs. Kramer. Dustin Hoffman and Meryl Streep, divorced, fight for custody of their child, Justin Henry. Mediocre script, excellent (*excellent*) acting all the way.

Monty Python's Life of Brian. What's all the fuss about? Just your garden-variety wickedly witty spoof about a Jew born the same time and place as Jesus who does *not* want to be a messiah.

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Swedish director who brought Garbo to America, was Moshe? That the word "bazooka," now used for a piece of lighting equipment and derived from the army's portable rocket launcher, originally came from the wind instrument made popular by the old radio and film comedian Bob Burns?)

Compare Katz's book with two competitors. Probably the most widely used one-volume film encyclopedia in English is *The Filmgoer's Companion* by Leslie Halliwell (Hill and Wang/Avon), now in its sixth edition. Halliwell has wretched entries on subjects and on national histories, some instant-dried synopses of notable films, and a great many biographical entries with a line or two of description in most cases and with both complete and incomplete filmographies. The trouble with Halliwell is the sparseness of descriptive material. On the other hand, most of his prose is so silly that extension would only make it hard to bear. (About *City Lights*: "Comedy over-flooded with sentiment, but some brilliant moments.")

Katz's most recently published competitor, *The Oxford Companion to Film* edited by Liz-Anne Bawden, I've already discussed here at length (*TNR*, August 21 & 28, 1976). I can't say that increased acquaintance raises my respect for it. I recently looked up the entry for *Citizen Kane*, read the first line "Press magnate Kane dies in his west-coast palace of Xanadu"—in fact, Xanadu is in Florida—and shut the book. But the entries for individual films, over 700 of them, may be the worst feature of the *OCF*. It does have some diagrams for its technical entries and occasional bibliographical references, which Katz does not.

The apparently inescapable disproportions in length are present in Katz. Equal space for Yasujiro Ozu and Ford Beebe. (No, I never heard of Beebe, either.) Birth and death dates are not always given. (And Katz has an obsession with cancer: except for unnatural causes of death like accident or suicide, the only cause he mentions is cancer, and he does it often.) Some of the entries are utterly flavorless, like the one for John Abbott, a flavorful actor. Some are only weak gestures. The whole comment on A. I. Bezzerides: "American screenwriter of masculine hard-hitting fare." Not even a birth date.

But on the whole the book is juicy and intelligent, and some of the entries—Antonioni, Bergman, Fellini, United States—are surely as sound as one could expect in the circumstances. No one, including Katz, will be astonished to learn that he hasn't achieved the encyclopedia ideal, but his long haul was well worth the trouble. (And note that the *OCF*, which was written by a large team, has only 767 pages—smaller pages, too.)

I've just read a purportedly serious review of Losey's *Don Giovanni* film which notes that some critics complained about the faces and physiques of the singers. (I certainly complained about several.) This new reviewer was troubled not at all on this point and asks why we shouldn't see opera as our forebears did, with good voices coming out of odd physiques. I don't know about this reviewer's forebears, but mine saw opera in a theater, usually huge, and were some distance from the singers even in the best seats. The singers' faces and figures and acting were not enlarged dozens of times in a medium from which ideas of realism are inseparable.

The art of biography.

Restoring Charles II

by Antonia Fraser

I came to the writing of biography through Lytton Strachey. My imagination was fired when I was a girl by reading a copy of *Eminent Victorians* in my parents' house in North Oxford. For me, that moment when I read his essay on Cardinal Manning was, in its modest way, like the moment when Gibbon was in Rome and heard the sound of Vespers on the Spanish steps: his vocation came to him. He would write the history of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire. What I admired about Lytton Strachey—and still do admire, incidentally—was his immense readability. I naturally assumed that his research was impeccable. The idea of peccable research—if there is such a word—was quite foreign to me, and it wasn't until much much later, reading Michael Holroyd's admirable biography of Lytton Strachey, that I realized how very peccable much of it was.

Nevertheless the seed was planted that biography could be exciting, that information could be communicated in a highly readable form. I still think that was a very important lesson to have learned so early. Mercifully it survived three years studying history at Oxford and many more bringing up children, until the moment, having written on antique dolls and toys (which fitted my nursery way of life) I was ready to embark on my first biography, that of Mary Queen of Scots.

Although Mary Queen of Scots is by no means the subject of my recent study, I learned so many lessons in researching and writing my *Mary Queen of Scots*—and also incidentally from my readers afterward—about the nature of biography, that I must dwell on her for a moment, on royal Mary as a preface to royal Charles. First of all, I tackled the character of Mary Queen of Scots from an uncommitted angle, if I may use such an unfashionable word. Partly out of ignorance and a rather open mind, I did not approach her with a conviction about her character. I did my research in the most conscientious way I knew how, learning 16th-century Scots, for example, to read the documents—not something I would do for just anyone!—visiting France, Scotland, working in innumerable libraries, and wherever possible working from the primary sources. I did not approach her character in order to prove anything about her I imagined I knew already.

Of course I had had a notion from childhood of Mary Queen of Scots as a very glamorous person, but I did not aim to prove that she was an ill-used creature, or a sex maniac, to cite but two possibilities. By reading Queen Mary's letters in the first instance, and other material later, I believe that I was able to build up a much truer picture than if I had approached her nature with a preconception.

In his book *On Historians*, Professor J. H. Hexter quotes Donald Kagan as

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dividing historians into "lumpers and splitters." This division, Professor Hexter believes, is far more effective than that, for example, between quantifiers and non-quantifiers or that between Marxists and non-Marxists. I quote Professor Hexter: "Historians who are splitters," that is those who like "to point out divergences, to perceive differences . . . do not mind untidiness and accident in the past: they rather like them." Lumpers, that is those who "want to put all the past into tidy boxes . . . do not like accidents; they would prefer to have them vanish." Now if the analogy is carried through to biography, I think biographers can be divided into provers and inquirers. Provers want to prove a thesis about a given person, and will rake their material very thoroughly—that is not in question—in order to establish it. Inquirers, on the other hand, will read the same material with an open mind and ask themselves not *how* can I prove X, but *what* does this material prove? In short, one might sum up the two schools of biographers even more simply as "Hows" and "Whats." Here are two examples. How can I prove from her letters that Mary Queen of Scots was a sexually passionate woman? As opposed to: what do her letters prove about Mary Queen of Scots? I found her, incidentally, fascinating but not passionate, more interested in power than in sex.

By temperament, I am a "whatter"—and my researches about Queen Mary confirmed my view that I would never have discovered the facts I did if I had approached her from the stereotyped point of view of so many other books.

Coming on, then, to the subject of King Charles II (1630-85) it was invaluable that I was a "whatter." Here the equivalent of Mary's alleged passionate nature is the delusive catch phrase about Charles—the Merry Monarch. So delusive is it—in England certainly—that my English publisher kept optimistically advertising the book in advance in their trailer catalogues as "the coming biography of the Merry Monarch." But to me, one of the important discoveries I made about King Charles II, which both stole over me and astounded me, is that if anything he was a melancholy monarch, although that isn't a quite accurate phrase either. But the conventional picture of this roisterous fellow—a girl at each elbow, chucking Nell Gwynn under the chin and enjoying her oranges, a spaniel somewhere around—no, this simply did not emerge at all. Yet it would have been

Charles II in 1684, portrayed as founder of the Royal Society, by Marcellus Laroon. Photo from *Royal Charles.*

easy to have discovered that evidence had I been specifically looking for it.

After all here is a man who *did* love pleasure. King Charles himself said on the subject of sin to Bishop Burnet that he rated falsehood and cruelty the two greatest sins. But God, he was convinced, would never damn a man "for allowing himself a little pleasure." The pleasures he loved certainly included women. The roll call of his mistresses is an impressive one, from Lucy Walter, his first mistress, to Louise Duchess of Portmouth, his last.

Then, he loved the theater, and it was thanks to his patronage that actors and actresses, hitherto a rather derided race, attained proper respectability. He loved horses, and the great English racing center of Newmarket owed everything to his patronage. He took part himself—it wasn't just a spectator sport—and he rode and won a race when he was 45, which the reports make clear was due to his horsemanship, not the sycophancy of courtiers giving way to their king.

Charles II also loved gardens and all aspects of what we would now call the environment—town and garden planning. The fire of London, appalling story as it was, did give the opportunity of replanning London; Windsor Castle and St. James Park both owe an enormous amount to his replanning, although the fact is sometimes ignored because King George IV came afterward and replanned it again. Charles made St. James Park into a wonderful place of popular recreation, introducing gondolas onto the new canals, rare birds, including a pair of pelicans from Astrakhan, a present from the Russian ambassador.

All this, and he loved swimming (five a.m. in the Thames—ugh—the courtiers didn't love that so much) and spaniels. His love of dogs was another thing the courtiers had reserved feelings about: I always imagine they felt as present day courtiers are alleged to do about Queen Elizabeth II's corgis. "God bless your Majesty, but God damn your dogs" cried one stalwart after being nipped, for the king's dogs were extremely spoiled.

Now this was obviously a man who was not indifferent to pleasure. I would go further and say that King Charles II was a genuine hedonist. Yet the more I examined his extraordinary and dramatic life, the more I realized that he

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could not possibly be described as "merry." A happy childhood—the boy in the Van Dyck pictures—yes, loved by his parents and loving them in return. But how was this a preparation for the traumatic events that followed? At the age of 10 he was sent by his father to the House of Lords, to plead for the life of his minister Strafford—a man Prince Charles knew and revered. Strafford was executed and, in a way, the Stuart family never recovered.

At the age of 12 the prince was involved in battle—the most bewildering form of battle to a boy, civil war. He left his father forever at the age of not quite 14, left England for Jersey and France when he was nearly 16. Finally, when he was 18, his father was, as Charles viewed it, cruelly murdered by the English revolutionaries, and there was not a thing the Prince of Wales, demanding, pleading, but moneyless and troopless, could do about it. So at 18, Charles II was, as a contemporary put it, "King in nothing but the name."

From this point on, things got worse. For the next 11 years the new King Charles II was mainly in exile, always poor, always begging, always aware that he could not help those who depended on him, turning now to France, now to Spain, now to anyone who might assist him. His mother Henrietta Maria nagged at him. They quarreled about religion. The commonwealth officials from over the water insulted him. When Charles did embark on a campaign with the aid of the Scots, the Scottish Presbyterians insulted his parents and made him pray to atone for their "blood-guiltiness"—an appalling prospect. When the Scottish army was defeated at Worcester, thereafter the king wandered in perhaps the most famous escape story in history, a fugitive hunted by the very people he had been brought up to believe were his loyal subjects. And then it got worse—worse and worse, more poverty, more humiliation until the totally unexpected wonder of the Restoration in 1660 which occurred, as all contemporaries said, out of the blue. As a young civil servant named Samuel Pepys wrote in one of the first entries in his diary: "Indeed it was past imagination both the greatness and the suddenness of it."

As I studied this period, first when I wrote about Cromwell and then concentrating on King Charles II, I began to realize that no man could emerge unmarked by these experiences. It was then I understood or began to understand what a wary if affable creature was greeted by those crowds on Restoration Day, May 29, 1660. Here was a man who had been betrayed, and never knew when it might happen again. King Charles II, then, feared revolution, because he had experienced it. What he couldn't know was that he would die in his bed 25 years after this Restoration, the last absolute king of Great Britain.

II

People argue about whether a biography can be written of a person to whom the writer is hostile. The answer is: yes, of course it can. Otherwise there would be no dispassionate biographies of characters like Adolf Hitler. Nevertheless, for me personally it would not be possible. I must feel a kind of initial sympathy if I am to spend five years of my life on a given subject. Besides, in the kind of interpretative biography I aim to write, I think some kind of sympathy is positively important. After all, prejudice against people makes one a bad judge of them—worse than prejudice in favor of them. If you are basically not in favor of someone, and do not try to get inside his or her skin, you may fail to create a coherent picture. Carlyle put this very well, I think, in his studies of *Heroes and Hero-Worship* when he reached the subject of Mohammed and wrote unabashedly: "I mean to say all the good of him I justly can. It is a way to get at his secret." That's it: getting at the secret is not achieved by hostility.

Nevertheless I do not acquit Charles II of many moral failings both in my mind and, more important, in my book. I think his dreadful experiences dulled him, so that he was kind by nature, cynical by training. Yet a biography is not a series of moral judgments: it is essentially a recreation of one particular individual, set against the background of his age. Ah, there's the rub. This to me is the real problem of the biographer's art, the placing of the individual. How much background do you select, how typical is a man of his background, how much is he atypical? Above all, a biography is not a history of the 17th century. In many ways Charles II was not at all typical of his time.

Let us take three examples. I will begin with his tolerance. King Charles II was undeniably a very tolerant man. He wanted everyone to have his or her own religion. As the Declaration of Breda stated on the eve of the Restoration, he promised "a liberty to tender consciences." He was, at first, as good as his word, allowing the Jews officially to reenter Britain for the first time and attempting toleration for the Catholics, though in that he finally failed.

All very delightful: but we must realize that what seems delightful to us was frightening and highly suspect in the king's own time. People wondered: what was his game? Was he giving away England to the foreign papists? It can indeed be argued that this toleration was politically unwise, if morally agreeable. Thus we must be wary of bringing our own values into our judgments on the past: they become warped.

Take another example—acceptance of secret subsidies from the French king. Here the position is reversed. We find this perfectly dreadful, as if the president of the United States were discovered taking bribes from Russia. How underhand, how corrupt, how dangerous! Now here we have to realize that what the king did, reprehensible or not, was not in any way unusual. The Whig leaders were in fact being heavily bribed at the same time by Louis XIV, although all their public utterances were against monarchical absolutism. This discovery incidentally so upset the editor of their state papers in the 18th century, that he wrote: "I felt very near the same shock as if I had seen a son turn his back in the day of battle."

The third example is rather more beguiling. King Charles II had a sense of humor which we much appreciate today. You really could make up a book of the wit and wisdom of King Charles II, and it would not be a short book, I can assure you. Perhaps the most famous example of his quick-wittedness occured when his crony Lord Rochester composed an impromtu rhyme about him. Rochester produced:

> We have a pritty witty King
> Whose word no man relies on
> He never said a foolish thing
> And never did a wise one.

To which the king relied urbanely that his words were his own but his deeds were his ministers'.

Then at the moment of the Restoration itself, on the day of the triumphal processions into London, the king remarked that it was obviously his own fault that he had been away from England so long, for since he had arrived in England he had met no one who did not passionately wish for his return. Finally, when the courtiers twitted him because his mistress Barbara Castlemaine had become a Catholic, King Charles replied that he never

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interfered with the souls of ladies, but only with their bodies, in so far as they were gracious enough to allow him.

However, I must emphasize that this lovely kind of wit was not as popular then as it would be now: indeed one of his critics, Lord Halifax, described him as having wit rather more than became a prince; there was a suggestion of *lèse-majesté* about these wisecracks, not quite what was expected of a king.

Lastly let us take the question of Charles II's relations with women. He adored the company of women, their conversation, to have supper with them, chat with them; he was astonishingly faithful to his mistresses, even if he was faithful to several of them at once. It's typical of him, I always think, that on the last active night of his life King Charles had supper with three of his mistresses, transformed into duchesses: Barbara Duchess of Cleveland, Louise Duchess of Portsmouth, and Hortense Duchesse de Mazarin. None of them was even remotely young by the standards of the time: in fact I worked it out that among them they had been in his service, if I may so term it, nearly 50 years.

Yet once again this liking for women's company was not a good quality in the eyes of King Charles's contemporaries—smacking of petticoat government, quite apart from immorality. There was a popular anecdote to illustrate this. In the late 1670s, the Accession Day of Queen Elizabeth I was increasingly celebrated, actually as a piece of Protestant propaganda. Somebody asked why such a fuss was made about the Accession Day of a Queen. The reply was: because she, being a woman, chose *men* for her counselors, a heavy hint that the opposite was taking place with King Charles II.

I must end on a more personal note. While I was researching my book on King Charles, I asked myself which of all my subjects I would most like to have met: Mary, the fascinating queen, Cromwell, the great man, or King Charles. I decided without hesitation that for his humanity, his warmth, even for his inner melancholy, my choice would always be King Charles II.

The United States and China in the Twentieth Century by Michael Schaller

(Oxford University Press; $9.95)

For a number of years now journalists and scholars have emphasized the myths that have dogged American dealings with China throughout our history. Enunciating an "open door" policy to prevent the demise of an independent China and the loss of the "China Market" to the United States, a succession of American leaders gave only lip service to this goal. Woodrow Wilson's acquiescence in Japan's seizure of the Shantung peninsula during World War I and Herbert Hoover's refusal to offer more than moral condemnation of Japan's conquest of Manchuria in 1931-32 are but two examples of the meaninglessness of the "open door." Though a weak, dependent country suffering under a corrupt totalitarian regime during World War II, China was falsely viewed as a great democratic power contributing to Japanese defeat and preparing to play a major role in postwar arrangements for peace. When the outbreak of the Chinese civil war in 1945 challenged these illusions, Washington continued to back Chiang Kai-shek's moribund Nationalist government on the assumption that the rise of a Chinese communist regime would mark a long-term extension of Soviet power in East Asia. The success of Mao's armies and the emergence of the People's Republic in 1949 provoked tragic recriminations in the United States, where attacks on professional foreign service officers for having "lost" China destroyed the careers of honorable men and helped drive the country into more than 20 years of tension with the Chinese communist government in Peking.

In this timely and lucid survey of the US and China in the 20th century, Michael Schaller, a young historian at the University of Arizona, provides a brief, 200-page summary of America's failure in China. As a succinct history and analysis, Schaller's book will join John K. Fairbank's *The United States and China* and Warren I. Cohen's *America's Response to China* as standard introductions to Sino-American relations. Like these earlier distinguished histories it will also help build a more constructive approach to China. At the same time, however, it will foster some new problems by encouraging the view that Sino-American difficulties have been almost exclusively the consequence of American attitudes and actions. What Schaller largely omits from his account is the role China played in creating Sino-American tensions.

Schaller contends, for example, that blatant American racism undermined possibilities for good relations with China. And so it did. In the 19th century Chinese migrating to America met open hatred and abuse: rioters against the "heathen Chinee" usually went unpunished, even if their crime was murder. "Coolie" laborers were valued workers, one medical book of the times explained, because their poorly developed nervous systems made them immune to ordinary pain. Described by Theodore Roosevelt as an "immoral, degraded and worthless race," the Chinese presence in America gave birth to the expression: "Not a Chinaman's chance." In response to pressures from western states, the Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882. In force until 1943, it barred the Chinese, along with "imbeciles, paupers, and prostitutes," from migrating to America or becoming citizens.

At the same time, though, the Chinese responded to Westerners in general and Americans in particular with racism of their own. All Westerners were "long noses" whose meat-eating habits made them smell like pigs. China was the Middle Kingdom and all outsiders were barbarians who were to be played off against one another for China's advantage. In short, Chinese and Americans alike were unprepared to think of each other in terms of equality and genuine regard. Schaller does not make enough of the fact that this was more a mutual than a strictly American failing.

Likewise, Schaller overstates the case against the United States during and after World War II. He is generally right when he says that American lack of realism spawned major difficulties with China during this time. Drawing on an important study he published earlier in the year, *The U.S. Crusade in China, 1938-1945*, Schaller concludes that FDR, "and

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most of those around him, had only the dimmest comprehension of Chinese conditions. They failed to realize that Chiang's military policy overlay a deeper political crisis in China, that these problems could not be solved by indulging Chiang's whims." Schaller sees the Roosevelt administration's failure to satisfy Chinese Communist requests for military aid and political contact in 1944-45 as another major blunder. It forced Mao into a reluctant alliance with the USSR and scotched the possibility that China would become "a major trading partner and an important counterweight to possible Soviet expansion in Asia. The Communists did not deny their commitment to a Chinese revolution," Schaller writes. "But they did constantly assert the belief that a Communist China need not threaten American interests."

The Truman administration, Schaller also says, destroyed any remaining chance for an accommodation with the PRC. Though recognizing its inability to save Chiang, the American government refused to abandon him entirely during his four year civil war with the Communists. Under considerable political pressure from the pro-Nationalist China Lobby and convinced that the Chinese Communists were pawns of Russia, the Truman administration acquiesced in congressional decisions to lend Chiang's government $200 million in 1948-49. This was in spite of the Nationalists' imminent demise and Truman's belief that the "Chiangs, Kungs and Soongs 'were all thieves, every last one of them.'"

There was greater understanding of China in Washington than Schaller suggests. Roosevelt, for example, was mindful of Chiang's failings and understood that there might be a Nationalist collapse. But American domestic constraints or fear that a communist victory in a Chinese civil war would weaken American resolve to play a major part in postwar world affairs moved FDR to encourage a Chinese compromise—a coalition government under Nationalist control.

Further, Schaller places too much responsibility on the United States for difficulties with Peking after 1949. For even if the United States had backed away from Chiang in 1944-49 and been strictly neutral in the Chinese civil war, it is doubtful that this would have assured a working relationship with the PRC. It seems unlikely that a fledgling communist government in China would have been able to maintain its revolu-

TWO FREE VARIATIONS

(from *With Akhmatova At The Black Gates*)

I. 1922

No cool, moist breezes, not a cloud
shadowing the flat, glass dome of the sky
that fall—September almost gone,
everyone shocked by its heat and color.
Thorns smelled like roses, smelled even heavier,
red sunsets choked the air, tormenting us,
the muddy canal turned green.
We will see this until we are all dead.
The sun came back again, again and again,
taking the capital, capturing the throne.
Sometimes, during the day, no one moved.
There was a silence in which rich and poor
were one. Not a grain of dust or a leaf floated on the air.
That autumn
shook every face and brick. It was so much like summer
even a snowflake could have sent out white petals.
I can still see myself at one of those
great moments of equality—I was standing next to a horse,
could hear its little sneezes, smell its flanks;
a soldier's boots, the back of his head where
the cap fit tight against his hair; bright metal.
I thought: I will see you until the day I die.
I went home: I bathed: I washed and braided my hair.
And that was when you arrived at my door.
I opened it. You looked at me. Your eyes
were cool and without hope like a leaf that has lost its color.

II. In Two

I'm empty. Not seeing you, staying away
is too mysterious, a victory
composed of unspoken phrases, silent words,
glances that stop at nothing except these walls,
glances that can't stop looking for your glance.
I go outside. It's beautiful near evening. Red hills.
Only inches between the first few stars.
I go back in, I almost see you, I reach out.
Only tears say what existence means.
A wild rosebush flaring near Moscow's part of this,
God knows why,
part of anything anywhere called love.

I sit here, seeing people on the beach.
They shift their bodies every few minutes, they move
like seals in the sun. Do these hulks live
for reasons other than why *we* persist,
believe, hope, cling to each other, search
one darkness or the other: physical, metaphysical?
I know—those last two words aren't opposite
these days, but that's something I can't explain.
Let those vacationers in Paradise
bask on the scorching sand. It's cold here.
My one real friend is autumn. I chose it.
I scour these walls to tell you what is mine:

memory without an image: that sacred, last time we did not meet:
I feel it: cold, pure, motionless flame of my triumph over fate.

Stephen Berg

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tionary esprit and stabilize its rule if it had sided with the US against the USSR or even adopted a posture of strict neutrality at the height of the cold war. Indeed, one may do better to assume that a period of tension between the US and the PRC was inevitable and that it was the product of Chinese as well as American conditions.

But whatever the Chinese contribution to Sino-American tensions, the rise of the PRC led to a period of extreme overreaction in the United States. Refusing to believe that the Chinese would have accepted communism freely and that such a regime could only be hostile to the United States, Americans sought first to root out the "treason" in America that had supposedly made China communist "and then to contain the contagion of what was called 'Red China'. . . . Looked at through the blinders of western liberalism and the ideology of anticommunism," Schaller observes, "the Chinese Communists' violent rejection of the American model proved the new regime to be a Russian pawn. As such, Communist China must be considered a threat to American security." From here, Schaller says, it was only a small step to American involvement in the Korean War and ultimately Vietnam. Part of the objective in both cases was to inhibit the influence and power of an aggressive communist China, which American leaders like John Foster Dulles and Dean Rusk compared to Nazi Germany.

Schaller's assessment of America's exaggerated fears of Peking in the 20 years after 1949 is persuasive. But again, US antagonism toward China was not simply the consequence of American paranoia. Chinese hostility to the United States in these years, punctuated by almost daily expressions of determination to overturn world capitalism and American influence in East Asia, justifiably fed American concern. In short, improved relations needed more than simply a change in American attitudes; they required greater rationality on both sides and a renewed sense of shared interests. Indeed, the collapse of the Sino-Soviet alliance and the desire to use each other against the Soviet Union opened the way to the current rapprochement in Chinese-American relations.

Schaller sees this as a healthy development. "China poses little threat to our own values and security," he writes. "In fact, the more involved with China the U.S. becomes, the more likely both societies will discover valuable aspects of the other." As a result of its new relationship with China, Schaller adds, the US for the first time in the 20th century is on good terms with both China and Japan. "In terms of its own interests, the United States may finally have achieved by peaceful means the balance for which it has searched for a century."

Fair enough. But if we are to maintain these improved relations with China and this new balance of power, we will need to keep in mind that Sino-American affairs are not just the sum of what the United States does or fails to do; indeed, that troubled relations throughout much of this century were also the product of what the Chinese thought and did. "Do not . . . believe that any Western civilization's action can ever affect the people of China very deeply," Franklin Roosevelt cautioned a government official in 1935. In the 1930s and the 1940s, Barbara Tuchman has explained, "China went her own way as if the Americans had never come." It is a "lesson" of the past worth recalling.

Robert Dallek

Robert Dallek, author of *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945* (Oxford University Press), is currently writing a book, *The American Style of Foreign Policy: Mass Culture and Foreign Affairs, 1896-1976.*

As We Know
by John Ashbery

(Viking; $12.50, Penguin paper; $7.95)

John Ashbery's eighth volume of poetry is certainly his most ambitious; it may even be his best so far. My tentativeness stems from its being two books at once. First comes *Litany*, a highly problematic and at moments magnificent long poem of some 65 pages, in two quite separate columns. Or is it two long poems resolutely refusing congress with one another, while running side by side? Then come 40-odd shorter poems, lyrics, and meditations, of which at least the following are anything but problematic, and indeed are superb: "Silhouette," "As We Know," "Flowering Death," "My Erotic Double," "Knocking Around," "Late Echo," "Tapestry," and "The Sun." Those eight poems stand with the best of Ashbery, and one in particular, "Tapestry" (of which more to come), is of the eminence of "Soonest Mended" in *The Double Dream of Spring* and "Wet Casements" in *Houseboat Days*. There are not many contemporary poems that deserve the old but crucial phrase: "inexhaustible to meditation." These do.

But I begin with *Litany*, the scandal of the volume and a text I have not yet "mastered," at least in the high Nietzschean sense of interpretation exercising itself as the interpreter's will-to-power over the text. With Nietzsche, I murmur: "Who is the interpreter?," even as I begin a ninth or 10th reading of this maddening but very amiable and accomplished poem. What is maddening has not come suddenly to Ashbery, at the age of 52.

It was always there, in an only apparent discursiveness that played at being a willful randomness. But, as before, Ashbery is neither discursive nor random. He is as intensely figurative a poet as Whitman and Stevens were, and like these ancestors he wears a mask of the casual extemporizer which no reader should trust for an instant.

Ashbery insists that *Litany* ought to be heard simultaneously as two monologues independent of one another, yet somehow related. I understand that he and another poet have so performed the poem before an audience, but I cannot regret my absence from that celebration. Sustained reading has convinced me finally that the right-hand column is much the better of what I suspect after all to be two poems, uneasily separate from one another. Not that the left-hand column lacks its glories, but it speaks for Ashbery's self whereas the right-hand meditation is the voice of what Whitman called the "real me," or the "me myself," a more inward and vulnerable aspect of the self. If my judgment is at all correct, then I would call the left-hand column a substitution for or sublimation of Ashbery's deepest desires, whereas the

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drawing of John Ashbery by David Schorr

right-hand side is more nearly an evasion or repression of those desires, which fascinatingly keep breaking through, revealing ranges of Ashbery's sensibility and intellectual ambition that have not been overtly evident before this. I give first a left-hand passage in which poetry, like the dreadful, is what has already happened:

> And the agony
> Of looking steadily at something isn't
> Really there at all, it's something you
> Once read about; its narrative thrust
> Carries it far beyond what it thought it was
> All het up about; its charm, no longer
> A diversionary tactic, is something like
> Grace . . .

Which is to say that Ashbery, unlike Wordsworth, cannot labor to keep his eye steadily upon the object, because every object now belongs to anteriority, and not to us. This rueful sublimation has its grace, but is weak confronted by the right-hand column's beautiful evasion that ends a brilliantly sustained passage on the use of poetry and the right use of criticism:

> And so leads us gradually back to words
> With names we had forgotten, old friends from
> Childhood, and then everything
> Is forgiven at last, and we
> Can sit and talk quietly with them for hours,
> Words ourselves so that when sleep comes
> No one is to blame, and no reproach
> Can finally be uttered . . .

"Words ourselves" is, in full context, a wholly adequate trope, and one of a litany of evasions of the right-hand "me myself." I call the poem/poems *Litany* "problematic" because with each rereading, I wonder why I (or Ashbery) need the left-hand side, but then I recall Whitman's *Song of Myself*, surely Ashbery's ultimate model, with its moving description of Whitman's evasive side; "the Me myself":

> Apart from the pulling and hauling stands what I am,
> Stands amused, complacent, compassionating, idle, unitary,
> Looks down, is erect, or bends an arm on an impalpable certain rest,
> Looking with side-curved head curious what will come next,
> Both in and out of the game and watching and wondering at it.

Litany extends the achievement of the Ashbery who begins to persuade us that he, rather than Whitman, has written these lines concerning his true self.

I have space to consider only briefly Ashbery's fresh triumphs in lyric and short meditative poems. His mode here is as clearly related to Stevens as *Litany* is to Whitman. Sometimes indeed the relation is a touch too clear: "The poem of these things takes them apart,/And I tremble. Sparse winter, less vulnerable/Than deflated summer, the nests of words."

Still, that is the second of "Five Pedantic Pieces," and is probably deliberate parody. Ashbery is most himself in "Tapestry," which can rival Stevens's "The Poems of Our Climate" as an "Ode on a Grecian Urn" for our time. "Tapestry," like Ashbery's masterpiece in the long poem, *Self-Portrait in a Convex*

MOVING?

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Coming:

Michael Harrington on E. P. Thompson.

•

Nathan Huggins on Eugene Genovese.

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Mirror, studies the estrangement of both artist and audience from the artwork, discovering anew the sorrow that the estrangement increases even as the aesthetic experience becomes more intense: "As words go crying after themselves, leaving the dream/Upended in a puddle somewhere/As though "dead" were just another adjective." At one moment in *Litany*, Ashbery commends Keats's sonnet, "On the Grasshopper and Cricket," as writing that does not offend us. At his best, as in "Tapestry," Ashbery is equally remote from all offense.

Harold Bloom

Harold Bloom's most recent book is a novel, *The Flight to Lucifer: A Gnostic Fantasy* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux).

Liberals and Social Democrats by Peter Clarke

(Cambridge University Press; $26)

Peter Clarke has taken as his subject the earnest but invigorating men and women who, at the end of the last century and the beginning of this, conducted the great debate in England between liberalism and socialism, individualism and collectivism, reform and revolution, always with the object of directly influencing the policies of the reigning governments and parties, and in particular of improving the condition of the poor. Although Mr. Clarke concentrates his attention on only four of them—L. T. Hobhouse, J. L. Hammond, Graham Wallas, J. A. Hobson—these four did not debate only with each other. They also disputed and collaborated with such figures as Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, Bernard Shaw, Gilbert Murray, Bertrand Russell, the Webbs, R. H. Tawney, J. M. Keynes, Harold Laski, Arnold Toynbee . . . and this is still only a skimming. They were all unusually gifted and articulate men and women who wrote to each other and kept diaries at least as copiously as they published and lectured, so there are rich veins of their own sharp observations for Mr. Clarke to work, which he does with a firm but unobtrusive hold on the material.

Some of the key figures in the debate were as much household names in liberal and progressive circles in America as in their own country: Tawney *(The Acquisitive Society)*, Hobson *(Imperialism)*, Wallas *(Human Nature in Politics)*, and of course the Fabians. One has only to read the back issues of this magazine to trace their influence, and several of them were either occasional or regular contributors to it. When the brilliant young American critic, Randolph Bourne, went to England in 1913-14, he sought them out, and his judgments were as sparkling as any in Mr. Clarke's book. "Professor Hobhouse, excessively judicial, with the high consciousness of excellence which the Liberal professor seems to exude"; "Graham Wallas, with his personal vivacity and lack of any clear philosophy, who considered the American sociologist a national disaster"; and "John A. Hobson, whom I cannot admire too much, a publicist with immense stores of knowledge, poise of mind, and yet radical philosophy and gifts of journalistic expression." The importance of these men and women has never been in doubt.

Journalism was their common form of expression. Some of them took academic posts and administrative positions, partly to bolster their incomes, but otherwise they spent much of their long careers, in some cases to the end, in ill-paid work for liberal reviews and newspapers. "They took the idea of getting a living as something by the way," writes Mr. Clarke. It was typical that Hammond refused both a knighthood and a Companionship of Honour, when these were offered. With no foundations or universities to lavish funds on them, no Italian villa where they could be pampered while they wrote their books, they nevertheless produced works that are still classics in their fields, even while turning out daily and weekly journalism of the very highest order.

Mr. Clarke never loses sight of them as individuals, but his main interest is rightly in their ideas. At the beginning he makes a distinction between the "moral" and the "mechanical" revolutionist: the first believing that only a moral change in our natures, "a change of heart, a new consciousness, will be the agent and sanction of a transformation within society"; the second believing that no such spontaneous change can be expected, since people are creatures of their circumstances, "and change would not take place until these had been changed from above by the vanguard party." He argues that there is "an equally important division between the moral and the mechanical reformist," and it can be tracked down again in the difference between the moral regenerationist or reformist and the pessimistic quietist. Every one of these—the last is the best of our neoconservatives—is among us today.

This review is not the place to trace where and how they disagreed—this is the accomplishment of Mr. Clarke, doing what one hardly believes could be done, bringing a dead debate back to life—but they have much to say to the uneasy and vagrant liberals and progressives of today. "Until the Liberal Party is based again on 'the intolerable disease' of lifelong thought, it must continue to decay," said Wallas in 1926, and the same words could be addressed to the Democratic party and its lost liberals today. All of Mr. Clarke's subjects were interested in the practical programs of politics, and would toil to get a pittance more for the laborer, if at the time that was all that they could hope to get. But they also knew that even the most practical programs of reform need a philosophical underpinning. The conservative can always take his stand on a pessimistic view of human nature, but the reformer constantly has to be reexamining and restating his optimism, the ultimate justifications of what T. H. Green called his "passion for improving mankind."

So amongst their committee work and their journalism they philosophized. They sustained their disease of lifelong thought from the 1880s all the way into the 1940s. These years saw the emergence of the working class as a political force; the permeation of all progressive thought by Marxism; the simultaneous rise of trade unions and socialist movements; the revolution in Russia; the counterrevolutions of fascism and national socialism; two world wars of

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hideous destruction; the growth of bureaucracy; the impact of Darwinism; the inrush of psychiatry; the collapse of religion; and what not else that all but destroyed the world into which they had been born? Yet how few of them quailed and how seldom; they clung to their belief in reason and persuasion and, against the fearful odds of the times, in the power of these to better men's lives.

Only a very few of them, and then rarely for long, threw in their hats with the Bolsheviks. They lifted their eyes now and then to see if there might not really be a new heaven or at least a new hope; but one by one they came down, hard and fast, against the tyranny of communism in Russia. They might explore, like Wallas in *Human Nature in Politics*, the then unappreciated power of irrationality in human nature, and therefore in the processes of democracy; they might be impatient at the readiness of the working class to vote for the status quo; they might momentarily be tempted to excesses of their own underlying elitism, as they trod the tightrope between the "moral" and the "mechanical" remedies; but they did not lose faith in "the amenability of human nature to rational persuasion," and those of them who became socialists were clear and insistent that "it had to be socialism with a human face."

Their "gifts of journalistic expression" were a part of their method and their saving: a very English way of forcing the abstract into the presence and to the test of the concrete. If one comes to this book from a reading of Gordon A. Craig's superb *Germany, 1866-1945*, which covers exactly the same period, how can one not be grateful for the empiricism and waywardness of the Anglo-Saxon temper? (Even as it saunters about and objects to blood sports, as these men and women did, with the same passion as they objected to militarism!) It is good to be reminded that ideas that were erected by continental thinkers into systems were independently explored by English thinkers who were confident enough to leave them untidy. Lenin's scornful comments in the margins of his copy of Hobson's *Imperialism* exactly make the point.

For all their deep indignation at the sheer grinding poverty of working-class life in their day, the dedicated men and women in this book were also moved, with an equal distress and clarity, to a recognition that what they were talking about was a spiritual and cultural impoverishment as well. When the few survivors of their band found the world

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after 1945 so cold and alien to them, and their elitism surfaced with all the petulance of defeated and disappointed and helpless old age, their real objection was to the "popular culture" with which the working class was being saddled: that working class which they had so selflessly sought to enrich, not only with decent wages and adequate pensions, but with all the boons to the mind and the spirit which by privilege they had enjoyed. In his remarkable histories of the Industrial Revolution, Hammond looked more and more at this cultural as well as material impoverishment; and in describing how popular opinion might be manipulated, Wallas was also adumbrating how popular culture might be used to manipulate. So they stood then on the frontiers, ready to contend, where the battle is still joined.

When did you last read a deeply thoughtful book that lifted your spirit with strenuous unillusioned hope? Mr. Clarke has written one. With an affection born of knowledge and the skill of literate scholarship, he makes these knotty men and women speak for themselves, his own voice an ever present but not persistent "by the way"; so giving us a work that is enchanting, vigorous, complex, readable, and important beyond the praise of any review.

Henry Fairlie

The Edward Hoagland Reader
edited and with an introduction by Geoffrey Wolff

(Vintage; $4.95)

African Calliope: A Journey to the Sudan
by Edward Hoagland

(Random House; $10)

Edward Hoagland has been called a "writer's writer," a label that suggests extravagant praise from critics and meager royalty checks from publishers. One of his earlier admirers, we learn in his 1968 essay, "On Not Being A Jew," was Saul Bellow. A magazine editor, when informed of this, was astonished: "You? *He* does?" Bellow's enthusiasm was for Hoagland's fiction, a genre he hasn't published since 1969. Since then he has devoted himself to mastering the personal essay, and readers have had to subscribe to a variety of magazines (*Village Voice, Harper's, Atlantic, Commentary*, and others) or buy one of his little-known collections of essays (great titles: *The Courage of Turtles, Walking the Dead Diamond River, Red Wolves and Black Bears*) to get their fill of his gorgeous prose. Random House has now released an Edward Hoagland reader simultaneously with his new travel book on the Sudan, giving reviewers a special incentive to bring his singular talent to the attention of a larger audience.

Hoagland's "oddball" prose, Geoffrey Wolff says in his fine introduction to the reader, is his signature, and, to be sure, in Hoagland's essays (on tugboats or prizefighting or taxidermy or country fairs or whatever) there's no mistaking the maker of these words. His wisdom and *angst* set the tone for each essay, but never so much that he becomes more important than his subject.

There is poignancy and conviction, and usually there are heroes in Edward Hoagland's stories. Like Sugar Hart in "Heart's Desire," a Philadelphia boxer, once a contender, who "got into some fast company, got smashed and smashed again, till the fanciness, the eagerness, the confidence and the vanity were crushed." Like Henri LeMothe, a "low-water man" in the story of same name, a septuagenarian who once dove from a 40-foot ladder and belly-flopped into a play pool of water 12 inches deep: "He goes *splat*. And when a microphone is put to him—'How do you do it?'—Henri says, 'Guts!' grinning at the pun."

In "The Problem of the Golden Rule," Hoagland cuts his own swath of belief: "I don't believe in a god you can pray to, but I do find I believe in God—I do more than I don't. I believe in glee and in the exuberance I feel with friends and animals in the fields, and in other emotions besides that."

We learn other things about Edward Hoagland in this collection: that he was a teenage socialist, that he attended "a kind of Yeshiva called Deerfield Academy"; that he has a severe stutter ("It may strike other people as more than a spasm, but to me it's a spasm of pain of a kind which I haven't time for, or time to regard as anything else"); that for him writing is "a spartan, bloody profession"; that his sense of sureness in life is "grounded in the wildness of the natural world."

"Grounded in the wildness of the natural world"—the line resonates, as does this one from *African Calliope*—"the wish to go and live in the bosom of raw nature." This wish, more than anything, I suspect, is what drew Hoagland to the Sudan. But something subtler, too, for as he explains, explorers have always been drawn to the remote regions of the world. For them, as for him, it is the urge to go back to raw nature itself and perhaps even *start over*, for the sojourner "to reexperience his own birth and thereby possibly straighten himself out." It is an explanation of adventurous travel far more purposeful than the tired "because it's there."

African Calliope is a different kind of travel book since it adheres to no strict chronological narrative. At first this method seems disjointed; haphazardly we learn about the Sudan: its size (bigger than France, Germany, and Spain combined); its agriculture (three-fourths of the world's supply of gum arabic—which helps make the foam in beer, the smoothness of ice cream, the chewiness of gumdrops—comes from the Sudan); its poverty; its relentless history of coups and civil wars. But along the fecund Nile, from the Arab North to the black south, even into Ethiopia where the Eritrean struggle rages on, what most interests Hoagland is the tableau of people's lives. Hoagland's portrayal of these people—the hospitable Sudanese, the well-intentioned United Nations and World Bank personnel, the expatriates from all over—is always revealing, always fiercely intelligent. One of the more memorable characters on Hoagland's calliope is Cornelius Boghosian, an Armenian who bore a stark likeness to Hemingway. Here is vintage Hoagland at work:

> Boghosian wore a bristly gray mustache and safari jacket, with a suitably clipped manner that showed he had been an officer with one of Montgomery's divisions. Yet behind these familiar emblems, this protective coloration, was

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an Armenian insistence upon a life of infinite possibilities: that we might stay out in the moonlight forever, that we might fall into another cushy berth with a dictator, that we might all die this evening, or become banner friends.

Calliope could have been the most doleful of journeys—the insufferable equatorial heat, the rats and diseases infesting village life, Hoagland's own despair of traveling alone ("I was hemorrhaging with loneliness," he says at one of his more contemplative moments) never stray from his narrative—but this writer's fascination with the Sudan and its people elevates his book to a journey of constant discovery, almost as much for the reader as I imagine it was for him. A writer's writer, yes, and more; Hoagland is a reader's writer who deserves all the readers he can get.

Raphael Sagalyn

Raphael Sagalyn is a contributing editor of the *Wilson Quarterly*.

Brief Reviews

A Stopping Place by A. G. Mojtabai

(Simon & Schuster; $10.95)

A. G. Mojtabai is one of those dolorously polished writers—F. Scott Fitzgerald was another—whose prose has the quality of fractured light, playing over the shards of things: the waning of a romance, the eclipse of a career, the dissolution of a mind. Her first novel, *Mundome*, was a startlingly lucid evocation of schizophrenia. Mojtabai's second novel, *The 400 Eels of Sigmund Freud*, recounted the disastrous consequences of an experimental program among a group of high school scientists and evinced, again, an unusual sense of the price that is paid for certain advantages of sensibility.

Her latest novel, *A Stopping Place*, takes off in another direction altogether. It is set in the real and imagined cities of Lahore and Cyrilibad, Pakistan, and focuses upon the theft of a holy Moslem relic. James Nirmal Roy, a retired public servant, is assigned to investigate the incident, which threatens to create havoc in Cyrilibad, along the Indian border. Nirmal is a man of consummate restraint, a product of mixed Christian and Moslem ancestry, and as such serves as a neutralizing agent between the contending political interests. There is the religious leader, Pir Nuruddin, whom Nirmal has been advised to keep an eye on: ". . . he's an incalculable factor. A mystic, a solitary, the last of his line. He has power, but there's no saying how he'll use it. And there's no approaching him." And there are other, more inflamed representatives who suggest that it would be unwise for an outsider like Nirmal to intervene in so inbred a matter. *How* unwise becomes clear only at the very end of the book; meanwhile Nirmal continues to follow one or two oblique leads and to disregard the signs of rising tension. "Crisis is tiring," he writes his beloved sister, Meena, "I'm counting on that."

A Stopping Place also follows the histories of two Americans who are only peripherally involved with the domestic turmoil but whose personal dramas unfold with a fatality all their own. Tom Melus is an enervated poet who is "doing" Asia by way of the lecture circuit. Rebuked by the Pakistani chairman of an English department for "The Wasteland"-like atmosphere of his poetry, he responds by quoting from other poets. When an eager student approaches Melus for "some advices, please" he turns his self-disdain on the boy: "'Study banking, you hear?' And, tapping his wrist where his watch was supposed to be, he excused himself. 'Banking!' he repeated. 'Lotsa luck.'" The other American is 24-year-old Kate Nazar, unhappily married to a handsome but imperious Iranian embassy attaché. Mojtabai is especially skillful at depicting the quietness of her characters' desperation, the imperceptible form grief takes:

> Kate went for hours without anything so shapely as a thought. She touched her face in the looking glass: it was smooth and cold, composed and passionless. To an outsider, nothing was visible, there was no sadness showing, no tear stains, no swollen lids, no downcurving lines. . . .

A Stopping Place is about different levels of misunderstanding. It seems to me to take its originating impulse from that scene of irreconcilable difference on which Forster's *A Passage to India* concludes, for Nirmal, after overseeing the safe return of the relic, is stabbed to death in the residue of political intrigue. It is still, many years later, "'No, not yet,'" and "'No, not there.'" At the book's core, as in Mojtabai's earlier novels, is a perception of humankind as utterly lonely, adrift in individual consciousness. If *A Stopping Place* is not entirely successful it is because the various strands never quite knit and the narrative remains uneasily divided between a larger story and several smaller stories. My guess is that Mojtabai's particular talent is better suited to the sort of close portrait she attempted in her first two novels than to the largesse of scope she aims for here. Still, this work confirms my sense that Majtabai is one of the more intelligent writers to have come our way in a long time.

Daphne Merkin

Daphne Merkin, the literary critic for the *New Leader*, is working on a novel.

Soviet Psychoprisons by Harvey Fireside

(Norton; $12.95)

Leonid Plyushch, a Ukrainian mathematician, was arrested in Kiev in 1972 for criticizing high officials of the Ukrainian Communist party; the physicist Yury Brovko was seized in 1975 after he inquired about possible emigration at the Swedish embassy in Moscow; Vaclav Sevruk, a sociologist who had contributed information to a *samizdat* Moscow human rights journal, was apprehended in 1972. What happens to these dissidents, who are never tried in the Soviet courts, and whose cases fail to attract attention in the West? As *Soviet Psychoprisons* demonstrates, they have been silenced with ruthless efficiency. Through an unspoken collaboration among the KGB, the Communist party, the courts, and the forensic psychiatrists, these and other dissidents were ordered to serve an extended period of compulsory confinement in one of the Soviet Union's 12 special psychiatric hospitals.

The actions taken against about one out of 10 Soviet dissidents follow a predictable pattern: to spare the regime the embarrassment of a public trial, the KGB refers the defendant to the Serbsky Institute of Forensic Psychiatry in Moscow. The specialists there invariably discover such symptoms as "a persistent mania for truth-seeking," inclination "to fruitless philosophizing," "obsessive reformist delusions." The court yields to their diagnosis, relieved

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not to be required to supply convincing legal evidence of the defendant's guilt, and in the defendant's absence finds him "nonaccountable" for his crimes and in need of forcible psychiatric treatment.

The psychiatric hospitals are operated like prisons. The patients are frequently brutalized by the orderlies—convicts who work off their prison terms for theft, murder, rape, and other crimes by keeping the patients in line. If patients complain of the overcrowding, the unsanitary conditions, or their wretched diet, they are tortured or force-fed massive doses of depressants that immobilize them and often cause lifelong nervous disorders. The patients' release, usually after two years, is contingent upon renunciation of their former beliefs.

The World Psychiatric Association's long-delayed official condemnation in 1977 of the abuse of psychiatry for political purposes was received coolly by Soviet medical authorities and party officials as yet another instance of "anti-Soviet slander." Since then, nothing has apparently been done to reform the system. But now forensic psychiatrists, in cooperation with other branches of the Soviet penal system, use more sophisticated methods to conceal their practice of repressing critics of the state.

Harvey Fireside, a professor of political science at Ithaca College, toured the Soviet Union in 1973, and he draws heavily on interviews he had with former patients of the psychoprisons and with the members of the medical and dissident communities who have protested the hospitalization of healthy individuals for their political beliefs. Wisely, he does not capitalize on the lurid details of the cases he describes; direct, factual, and academic, his account relies for its force upon the wealth of information he has compiled rather than upon his own indignation. In *Soviet Psychoprisons* he exposes the reasons behind the Soviet Union's travesty of the means and goals of psychiatry, and questions the motivations of psychiatrists who abandon medical ethics, participate in the Soviets' system of forensic psychiatry, and frequently convince themselves that they are agents of "the therapeutic state."

But the heart of the book lies in its four appendixes. These contain the writings of the dissidents, who articulate the conditions of their arrest, confinement, and mistreatment with fierce irony and eloquence. The works were written principally for the benefit of other political activists: to give legal advice on presenting their cases; to suggest the psychological tactics to follow with the psychiatrists themselves during questionings ("However disagreeable it may be, the best motivation you can offer for the actions being imputed to you is: 'I wanted to become famous, to be well-known; I did not understand the seriousness of the consequences; . . . I did not realize that I had gone too far,' and so on. Unfortunately it is precisely unpleasant reasoning like this which will be interpreted in a positive light by the psychiatrist."); and to give moral support in the event of incarceration and treatment. The documents were also written to create awareness in the international community of these previously hidden cases.

With the exception of a handful of organizations like Amnesty International and the Working Commission to Investigate the Use of Psychiatry for Political Purposes, widespread objections have not been voiced against psychiatric abuse in the Soviet Union. As Mikhail Kukobaka says in his "Memoirs,"

> I am told: No one will believe this. This can't be proven. They don't believe now that healthy people are crippled in crazy houses for dissident thinking, that physical torture is used under cover of 'white robes.' Man doesn't want to believe in evil, in very great evil. It tries one's conscience. It forces one to think: if this is true, why do I remain on the side, why don't I interfere? It means that I am a coward, I am dishonorable. It is easier not to believe.

Indeed, as Soviet officials are well aware, even if we do believe in this kind of evil, the great majority of us prefer not to accept the responsibility such knowledge entails. Fireside's book is a painful and compelling testimonial to those who have been the victims of this evil, and who have had the courage and the conscience to speak out against it.

Dorothy Wickenden

Six Moral Tales by Eric Rohmer

(Viking; $12.95)

What we remember from an Eric Rohmer film is its striking visual texture: the play of anxiety and interest across Jean-Louis Trintignant's thoughtful face in *My Night at Maud's* as Maud—beautiful Françoise Fabian—slowly seduces him during their one night together; the sparkling lake and the lovely gardens and the even lovelier girls in *Claire's Knee;* the look of Paris in *Chloë in the Afternoon* and of wintry Clermont-Ferrand (also the scene of *The Sorrow and the Pity*) in *Maud.* Yet the films themselves are psychological, focusing on a single character, a man just past his first youth, and his more or less agreeable dilemma—whether to pursue a delightfully alluring, but possibly ensnaring, female. His moment of choice is what makes these films "moral tales," a sense of moral that, abstractly considered, seems shallow, but that Rohmer's visual poetry renders convincingly adult.

The trouble with these story versions of the films—and I should point out that they were written as stories, not screenplays, before the films were made—is that they lack the verbal equivalents of the films' visual intensities. As a result, both the inadequacy of Rohmer's moral vision and the O'Henry shape of his plots are laid embarrassingly bare. However, since they do succeed marvelously in creating an atmosphere of unhurried, reciprocal flirtation—is it a peculiarly Gallic mood?—these "moral tales" can be enjoyed simply at the level of vicarious participation. Besides *Maud, Claire's Knee,* and *Love in the Afternoon,* the collection—which the publisher unaccountably calls a novel—consists of three as yet unfilmed stories. The translation by Sabine d'Estrée is only occasionally ludicrous.

Jack Beatty

Correspondence, *from page 3*

reinforced by either ethnic or economic cleavages.

Since Islam undeniably retains a strong position in the traditional culture of these societies, it would be surprising indeed if the frustrations engendered by rapid socioeconomic change, contact with alien and unfamiliar people and ideas, and the hardships imposed by economic instability did not throw the masses back upon more familiar and comfortable religious symbols. But when we observe conflict between groups divided along ethnic, economic, and religious lines, how do we know whether the most important difference between them is that they pray to a dif-

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ferent God, that they speak a different language, or that one group is wealthier than the other? And can we take surface indications at face value?

Frank Tachau
University of Illinois, Chicago Circle
Chicago, Illinois

To the editors:

Michael Walzer writes with reference to a rare peaceful demonstration of Islamic fervor: "Nor does this fervor, any more than in Jewish or Christian history, often take such peaceful forms." Does Walzer really believe that Jews have perpetrated the same kinds of savagery on those outside their faith as have Christians and Moslems throughout their histories? Jewish religious fervor does not result in crusades, inquisitions, pogroms, jihads, etc. The offhand egalitarianism of Walzer's comment may have been motivated by a sense of fairness, but it obscures fundamental differences unjustly.

Mitchell L. Model
Providence, Rhode Island

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THE NEW REPUBLIC MAGAZINE

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"The characters and situations in this book are imaginary." Ha, the California Supreme Court said to novelist Gwen Mitchell and her publisher, Doubleday, in upholding a libel judgment for Dr. Paul Bindrum, the pioneer of "Nude Encounter" therapy. Bindrum objected to an account of what was "obviously" him and some of his fleshy sessions in Mitchell's novel, *Touching*. The court ruled that a "reasonable" reader would conclude that the novel's Dr. Herford was clearly modeled on Dr. Bindrum even though they shared absolutely no characteristics except for the usual number of limbs, etc., and the practice of nude encounter therapy, and Dr. Bindrum has no monopoly on that practice in California. Earlier this month, the US Supreme Court declined to review the case. This may have been a mistake. Bindrum's complaint may illustrate the thinness of a lot of imaginative work these days, but putting courts in the business of divining the connection between life and art is inviting real trouble. Playing by the new rules, Zelda Fitzgerald legally could have socked it to F. Scott. Katherine Mansfield and John Middleton Murray would have had a strong case against D. H. Lawrence for his "fictional" portrayal of them in *Women in Love*. For the creation of Molly Bloom, Nora Joyce could have had the book thrown at her husband. Saul Bellow's safe; Charles Citrine in *Humboldt's Gift* is "obviously" Delmore Schwartz, but Schwartz was dead when the book was published. Forget Balzac, Dickens, Fielding, Proust, and other defendants in great lost lawsuits of the past. What about the future? Can John Updike and his son David, both writers who frequently portray a father or a son in their fiction, now bring each other to the Bench? Should Mrs. Updike be chief witness? Scott Turow and John Jay Osborne may come to regret bitterly their fictional portrayals of Harvard Law School a few years ago. Law professors are notoriously litigious, and the upcoming Christmas vacation will give them time to prepare their suits.

Every work of the imagination derives from real life experience, of course, but today's public seems to want as much derivation, and as little imagination, as possible. There were books and a TV movie about Entebbe. There's a film under way about Chappaquiddick. At this very moment plans probably are being made for *Hostage: The Motion Picture* and the obligatory "novelization." I spent Thanksgiving weekend reading Norman Mailer's *The Executioner's Song*, a "true life novel" about convicted murderer Gary Gilmore. I'm still thinking about it—because I was so disappointed. What did I expect? To understand more fully what kind of person could say "Let's do it" to his executioner? Even after more than 1000 pages, I still feel I know less about Gary Gilmore and his world than I do about Emma Bovary or Leopold Bloom or Dostoevski's underground man and their worlds. More than 1000 pages—and Mailer reveals in a note that that's only one-fifteenth of the material he amassed. He also discusses the intricacies of the process involved in "fictionalizing" the material. But process can really only be enjoyed by practitioners and a few others. Non-fiction novelists, like hyperrealist painters, can create something amazing, but the amazement is the sole reward. The imagination, so myopically and conscientiously shackled to facts, never gets a chance.

Trying to meet people in bars and at parties is tough. Those who want to try something else, or those who are merely aficionados of "Personals" columns, should check out the *Boston Phoenix*'s "entirely new" classified section called "Person-to-Person." In order to get you to realize that people who place such ads are normal and sincere—just like you—the *Phoenix* explains that "you can say just what you're looking for in that special person. Then *you* decide which responses to follow up, because Person-to-Person uses no names and the *Phoenix* supplies box numbers." How and why that's any different than regular raunchy "Personals" eludes me; and the ads themselves, with their language of initials, seem pretty much the same. The only difference I could discern was the measure of honesty. People admit to being "Waspish" or "previously married to a Harvard M.D." and to wanting a "librarian-type" or a relationship "like an MGM musical of the '40s." Perhaps most honest is the SMLS (single male law student) who wants "to meet F 28-35 who enjoys restaurants, movies, and wouldn't mind typing occasional paper."

I happen to be one of the unlucky ones whose family never sat down and made the sensible decision to declare a moratorium on intra-family present-giving. So every holiday season I have to stroll for hours in hopes of finding something suitable and, if possible, not totally unnecessary for two brothers, a sister, and parents whom I love but rarely see. I try not to be sexist; I'd feel guilty giving my mother a new omelette pan, though she'd probably like it and—perish the thought—be the only one in the household to use it. I try not to give books because I've been reprimanded they're impersonal. I try not to give anything *too* personal. I try not to give "gifts"—the useless gewgaws in souvenir and specialty shops that obviously are there only for people who haven't got a clue as to what to buy. I try not to give clothing because bad fits, when not downright embarrassing, are a nuisance for the recipient. I try not to buy a record just because someone's got a phonograph, film just because someone's got a camera, golf balls just because someone's got clubs. Like I said, I stroll for hours. This year I saw lots of electronic toys and gadgets, but for the most part nothing really interesting. ("New Car Scent," which is made by Velvet Touch Products and is just what you think it is, was too ridiculous to be interesting.) As usual, when I'm shopping for others without success, I look for myself, often for the shirts, socks, and underwear I always seem to be needing. What kept me from getting too upset about the price of socks was that I couldn't find a men's store in Georgetown—admittedly a pricey area—that sold underwear. Granted, it's not chic to shop for underwear, but I was still under the impression it had to be done occasionally. Are underwear-shoppers "undesirables"? Here and there I found a clerk who would bring out—when I asked—some plastic tubes containing nylon bikini-like briefs. For more cloth, I had to go to the lower-brow stores downtown, where, to my joy, I found displays of Jockey and Hanes. I emerged, package in hand, still without family presents. So I went home and sent off checks. Yesterday an envelope arrived from my brother; inside was a check for $10 more than I'd sent him. I thought about quickly buying him something for $10 or so, or sending him a second check for the difference, but ended up deciding against it. After all, it's the thought that counts.

Marc Granetz

Marc Granetz is editor at New Republic Books.

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An American Dies in Tehran

Bribing Big Business

Harold Bloom on John Ashbery

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